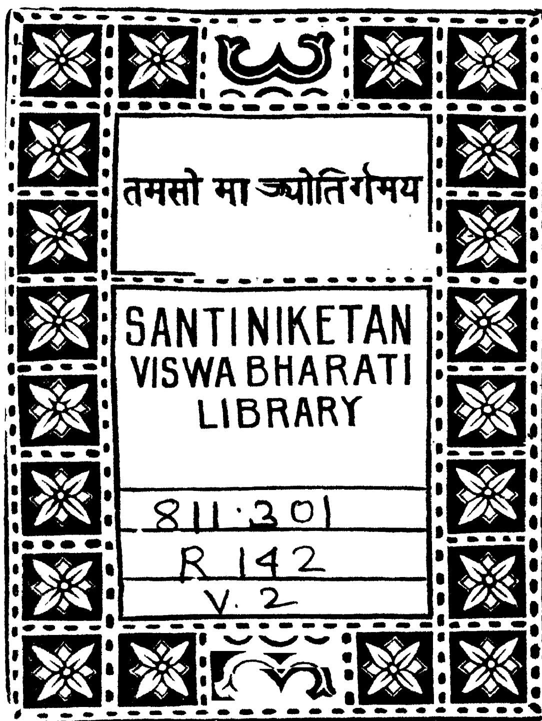

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KALIDASA:

HIS GENIUS, IDEALS AND INFLUENCE.

BY

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FOREWORD.

In a classical passage describing the completion of his great life-work Gibbon says: "But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that, whatsoever might be the future date of my *History*, the life of the historian must be short and precarious". To compare small things with great, I had the same feeling of melancholy as I was writing the last lines of this two-volume study of Kalidasa. My noble friend Mr. T. K. Balasubrahmanya Iyer was eager to publish the study as a revelation of Indian culture, just as he has been always eager to advance the cause of Indian culture in all other ways. He has now completed the task of publication and I render my sincere meed of thankful admiration to him. Kalidasa was the perfect summation and self-expression of a free and united and dynamic and prosperous and spiritual

India, and a loving study of his genius will help us to achieve the regeneration of India and to reseat our beloved Motherland in her throne of glory.

Madras. *K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri.*

CONTENTS.

—KALIDASA—

His Genius, Ideals and Influence.



CHAPTER I.

Kalidasa As a Master of the Æsthetic.

IN this volume I shall present Kalidasa's genius in its many-sided glory and show how he was one of the most perfect incarnations of the Hindu racial genius. The first and foremost characteristic which we must remember in regard to him is that he had a soul finely attuned to beauty and had a keen perception of æsthetic loveliness and delight. I shall deal in this chapter with his concept of the æsthetic and his vision of beauty in art. In my work on Indian Æsthetics, I have attempted to show the Indian æsthetical concepts and incidentally referred to Kalidasa's contribution to Indian Æsthetics.

The Æsthetic is a late arrival in the course of human civilisation. Primitive art is natural, sponta-

neous and unconscious. But in the later art which is the product of human civilisation and refinement the personality of the artist is an ever-increasing factor and is consciously creative. In lyric and elegaic poetry it is everything. In narrative and epic poetry and dramatic literature it is apparently withdrawn from the work of art but is none the less a pervasive though silent influence. It is not true to say that 'as civilisation advances poetry almost necessarily declines'. That famous dictum of Macaulay is a sparkling untruth. There is certainly a difference between the instinct of wonder in early civilisations and the emotion of wonder in highly developed civilisations. The poet is at all times "a priest to us all of the wonder and bloom of the world." This perception of beauty and bloom loses something but gains more as we pass from racial youth to racial maturity. Poetic emotion is an exaltation of human nature above its ordinary levels in life. The surge of emotion causes a surge of expression. The nature and force of the surge change as civilisation advances. Ideals of beauty in life and in speech undergo a transformation. But the faculty of wonder is a deep-seated power, and culture does not kill or even harm it though it gives it a new

turn and a new intensity. Æsthetic utterance through figures of speech may have diversities of note in the early and later life of nations. But rich and radiant and rhythmic utterance is of the most intimate essence of life, and men will never tire of beauty and love and joy.

The note of æstheticism is introduced by the conscious colouring of ordinary human emotion by the play of a poet's personality. Such æstheticism becomes more intensive as the complexity of civilised life increases. Let us take the art of dancing by way of illustration. Primitive dance was a delighted play of limbs due to the surge of feeling in the heart. But civilised dance rejoices in conscious poise and pose and symmetry and aims at expressing sentiment and emotion by the silent but eloquent poetry of rhythmic poetry of movement. Similarly style in literature and painting and music and other fine arts, being the expression of personality, will vary from age to age as the racial personality as well as individual personality which is coloured by the racial personality while having its own original force undergo transformation. Style is the individuality of expression due to individuality of

outlook and feeling. Buffon said well *Le style c'est homme* (the style is the man). Nay, the style is the race as well as the man. Style has been well described as "the imprint of humanity on nature" and as "the embodiment of the ideal." It is the expression of Individual and Racial personality in art.

In short, Art is as permanent as Beauty and Love and Joy. Æsthetics treats of the theory and practice of art. Man can no more live without Æsthetics than without Erotics. The emotion of human love is one of the primary impulses of human nature. But civilised love is more restrained, self-conscious, and volitional than primitive love, and aims at adjustment of worthy means to worthy ends. It seeks not only delight and fulfilment but also refinement and grace and sanctity. The same tendency is observable in Art and Æsthetics as well.

The real nature of beauty has been a puzzle, though all men and women feel its charms and poets and artists realise its fascination more keenly and render it more effectively than others. The loveliness of lines and curves, the glory of tints, the sweetness of melodies and the subtle delights of words and ideas are as wonderful as the glories of

nature and the charm of human loveliness. Our first initiation into beauty comes from nature with her spacious firmament on high lit with sun and moon and stars, her glories of sea and earth, the coloured tapestry of flowers, the forests with their tingling silentness, the rivers bearing their gifts of life and loveliness, and the mountains communing with the sky. It has been well said that Nature is the Art of God. The next initiation comes with the dawn of love and the joyful realisation of the sweetness of all looking at us with human eyes. Our next initiation comes when art blossoms in our hearts and fills the universe with "a light that never was on sea or land, the consecration and the poet's dream." Our supreme realisation comes when we somehow thrill to the call of the Infinite and we have divine intimations "of that fair Beauty which no eye can see and that sweet Music which no ear can measure."

We cannot ascribe the sense of beauty to a mere rich riot of youthful blood. It is in many cases even more poignantly felt in age than in youth and gives to our older years its consecrated charm. It visits:—

"This various world with as inconstant power
As summer winds that creep from bower to bower."

The deliberate curves and tints of a lotus petal and its soft touch gentle like an impalpable strain of music fills us with a mysterious yearning and delight no less in age than in youth. A gentle melody or a rich idea of poesy thrill our worn-out frames as ecstatically as our youthful bodies.

The sense of beauty is not an intellectual process. It is something deeper, richer, fuller and more fundamental. "The vision and faculty divine" does not work by methods of logical analysis. It has no need of premises, syllogisms and conclusions. There is a spontaniety about its arrival and its departure. Suddenly it bubbles over from some unknown inner spring. All that we need is a general purity and nobility of cultural life and a wise receptiveness and passivity and quietude of spirit. Then the vision of beauty flashes out on us in an unforeseen way from unexpected places.

Such a sense of beauty has no low earthiness about it at all. It belongs to external things but the

element of acquisitiveness is not there as in our economic relation to life. It belongs to sex but there is no sexual element in it. These other aspects are accidents in temporary connection with it. It is "like a star and dwells apart". It is without any touch of acquisitive or reproductive passion. It does not arouse our sense of proprietorship and there cannot be any estate of fee simple in it. It is felt as much in lightnings and storms and conflagrations dangerous to life as in smiling fields and gentle streams. It summons us out of our petty imprisoned life into the larger freer life.

Thus the sense of beauty, mysterious and baffling and even apparently whimsical as its movements are, is the deepest thing in us all. It charms the young and the old and is independent of age or sex or wealth or power. It is one of the surest proofs of the immortality of the soul. It is the soul's perception of "the light whose smile kindles the universe." There is also an element of ante-natal reminiscence in it. Kalidasa has brought out this truth in his world-famous verse in Act V of Sakuntala

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान्
पर्युत्सुकी भवति यत्सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।

तच्चेतसा स्मरति नूनमबोधपूर्वं
भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौहृदानि ॥

(The reason why a happy man, when he sees beautiful things or hears harmonious sounds, becomes full of a vague melancholy is that his ante-natal companionships rooted in his emotional nature are remembered by him without their rising to the surface of his consciousness).

(Further, beauty implies unity in diversity,) rhythm, harmony, proportion, balance, symmetry and other elements of charm and attractiveness such as colour, form, brightness, expression and grace. It is not possible to weigh these elements against one another and establish a scale of degrees as amongst them. Such a self-dissection of the imaginative perception of Beauty is a task which is as distasteful as it is futile. All the abovesaid elements and many others are necessary constituents of Beauty, some of them being outer decorations and others being inner graces of spirit. But the essence of Beauty is elsewhere. Beauty is the outer vesture and manifestation of the divine Bliss which is at the heart of things. It is this Bliss which blossoms as Beauty in the outer

realm of creation and as Love in the inner realm of emotion. Beauty calls us out of our lower self into the higher self and this ascent from the lower self into the higher self is called Love. When we see and love Beauty we become one with it in mind and attain a liberation of the higher self in us. In short the sense of beauty is the call of God to us from life to life. The cry of the soul for the Over-soul is the heart of our longing for Loveliness. That is why we seek not to possess Beauty but to be possessed by it. Acquisitiveness is the call of Death; self-surrender to the Infinite is the call of God. Visible beauty is the symbol of the Invisible Glory, and its call is the voice of God and our love of it is the ladder leading to our love of God.

.. From beauty we pass naturally to Art. Art is the outer expression of our inner vision and realisation and enjoyment of Beauty. It includes comprehension as well as creation of Beauty. Its organ of perception and activity is the imagination. The opposite of the imaginary is the real and not the true. Imaginative truth is as true as the truth of reality. Art is one of the earliest and most natural activities of man. But for high art the new evane-

scent vision of Beauty is not enough. It requires knowledge of artistic technique and tradition; it needs a rich strenuousness of the inner life; and it demands a dedicatedness of spirirt. Mere amteurism or soulless professionalism in art can never lead to great and lasting achievements. A true artistic temperament is its own justification and its own reward. The joy of it is in the visioning and dreaming of beauty and in the expression of it through the *media* of art. Art is thus a calm record of a quivering ecstacy. This element of calm is absolutely needed to work the first careless rapture into a lasting and final work of art. The rich throb and riot of emotion must give place to a chaste and holy and austere and dedicatedness of word from which alone can rise the secondary rainbow of Art from the primary rainbow of Beauty which itself is enkindled by the Sun of Divine Glory. The great foe of Art is conventionality. Each beauty-loving and artistically endowed soul must look out on the world with its own inner eyes, trained no doubt by the past but eager to see things as they are and for its own delight. Hence it is that the unrestrained spontaneity of love of beauty has to be wrought into the restrained spontaneity of love of art. Art re-

quires an austere economy in expression for the purpose of achieving maximum of effect with the minimum of means. It requires a daily cultivation of taste aad a frequent assay of expression. It is from such an attitude of mind that there comes the power of secondary creation—an image and an echo of the divine power which has fashioned the things of beauty which are a joy for ever. The autonomous imagination of the artist partakes in a minor measure of the grand creative power of God.

The nature of man being a unity, art must exist for the whole of man and cannot exist for its own sake. Truth is as much goodness as it is Beauty. Beauty is the bliss-aspect of Truth while goodness is the law-aspect of Truth. Art is the expression of essential beauty in things and must therefore be in harmony with Truth and Goodness. It is creative because it belongs, like Truth and Goodness, to the realm of values, and it is the function of idealism and creativeness to emphasise Value and to declare and cause an ascent of values.

Æsthetics aims at revealing to us the nature of the Beautiful and the significance of the arts and of æsthetic values. Our Love of beauty is different

from our faculty of knowledge and our surge of desire. There is a real element of disinterested, detached, impersonal emotion in it which distinguishes it from the intellectual attitude and the practical attitude of the mind. If Art creates a world of its own, Æsthetics charts the new creation. Mr. A. C. Bradley says: "Its (Art's) nature is to be not a part, nor yet a copy, of the real world (as we commonly understand that phrase) but a world in itself independent, complete, autonomous." Mr. T. A. Richards says equally well: "The arts are our storehouse of recorded values. They spring from and perpetuate hours in the lives of exceptional people, when their control and command of experience is at its highest, hours when the varying possibilities of existence are most clearly seen and the different activities which may arise are most exquisitely unveiled, hours when habitual narrowness of interests or confused bewilderment are replaced by an intricately wrought composure."

Such is the real nature of Beauty and Art and Æsthetics. In India their essential being was realised with true insight and enjoyed with a pure and intense delight. In Indian art the aim is to see and

show the play of the Divine in and through Man and Nature. The Indian is sure of the reincarnations of the human spirit until it achieves self-transcendence in and by attaining unity with the Divine spirit. He is not hence entirely engrossed with the present. He is not a blind worshipper of the ever-aging evanescent human body but knows its value as the golden ladder of the higher life. He realises and uses the present as a symbol—nay, as a tabernacle of Eternity. He knows that God is immanent in everything and so he realises the unity of all creation in God's Eternal and Blissful Being. To him God is omnipresence as well as omniscience and omnipotence. He thus aims at realising the Ananda (Bliss) which is at the core of things and his creativeness in Art is but the surge of this spirit of Ananda in him. The beauty of Art, like the beauty of Life, is proportionate to the free play of this bliss of the soul. The Indian artist is under the sway of a passionate impulse to remind Man of his divine origin and nature and destiny. His reward is the awakening of the Ananda which is latent in man and is obscured by incessant toil and worldly desire, Utility is the appeal of the world to the animal in man but art is the appeal of beauty to the divinity in man.

I do not think that I can appropriately pursue this subject further in this volume which is devoted to the genius of Kalidasa. The magical word in the realm of Indian Æsthetics is *Rasa.* I have dealt with this concept of Rasa in great elaboration in my work on Indian Æsthetics. Rasa is that permanent and all-pervasive emotional mood which is the reaction of the soul to the multi-coloured emotional impacts of life and which is the product of the disinterested delight of the poet in creation and kindles a kindred mood of disinterested delight in the beholder or the the reader or the hearer.

What I wish to emphasise here is that the Æsthetic is the child of civilisation. We must get rid of the idea that the perception and expression of beauty become less vivid and intense as civilisation becomes more and more complex and rich in colour and variety. It is in the conscious æstheticism of a great and original poet in a cultured age that we must seek for a revelation of the innermost and loveliest essence of beauty and art. Beauty is the manifestation of the Divine in Nature and in Humanity and its vital elements are rythm and radiance and righteousness. Art is the realisation and expression of beauty in a

mood of calm ecstasy born of the recollected enjoyment of beauty. In it we see the union of inner *effluence* and outer *influence*. Taste is the right perception of art. Æsthetics is the right theory of art. It seems to me that such enjoyment of beauty and such expression of it in art, and such taste for the beauty and such a theory of the beautiful will have a richer mellowness as time goes on and the national life increases in its rich complexity. The loss of the early incandescent glow of feeling and delight is more than compensated for by the deeper enjoyment and the riper utterance of maturity. To use the language of Indian Aestheticians there is more intensity in Bhava and Vyangya and Rasa and more conscious and delicate and designed grace of *guna* and *alankara* in the highest poetry of the cultured ages provided civilisation is not allowed to become a devitalising and dehumanising and dedivinising influence and the racial mind is loyal to its highest instincts and ideals while probing and plumbing the depths of life as the result of ever-growing experience.

I have not come across a more perfect exposition of Aesthetics than that contained in the following stanza which occurs in Act I of Sakuntala.

चलापाङ्गां दृष्टिं स्पृशसि बहुशो वेपथुमतीं
रहस्याख्यायीव स्वनसि मृदु कर्णान्तिकचरः ।
करौ व्याधुन्वत्याः पिबसि रतिसर्वस्वमधरं
वयं तत्त्वान्वेषान्मधुकर हतास्त्वं खलु कृती ॥

(You touch often the tremulous eyes of the trembling lady ; You sound gently, flying near her ears, as if you are uttering secrets to her ; You drink the nectar of her underlip which is the treasure of love's delight while her hands are a-quiver with feeling. *O honey-maker, we are lost in our search for truth; yours is the accomplished life*).

The great poet points out here that the method of the artist (the honey-maker) is not the method of the scientist (the truth-seeker). The Artist does not seek truth through the gate of reason. He reaches the core of reality by imagination and intuition. The joy of reaching the core of sweetness is far greater than the sober pleasure of investigation of truth by reason.

Kalidasa's sensuous imagination is one of his most remarkable characteristics. It enabled him to

present the truths of life with power of concrete presentation and with a glowing and vivid imagery. He excelled in all the elements of true poesy as described by Indian æstheticians. He had a never-failing store of *gunas* and *alamkaras* and his mastery of *bhava* and *rasa* and *dhvani* is equally remarkable. I shall deal later on with these aspects in detail when discussing the excellences of his poetry. His style is called technically the *Vaidarbhi riti* which eschews long compounds and seeks simplicity and grace and euphonious combinations of sounds. It is said also that his style has *Kaisiki vritti* (softness and gentleness of utterance), sweet *sayya* (inter-relatedness of words), and *Drakshapaka i.e.* the mellowness of ripe and sweet grapes ; in which sweetness pervades and exudes in abundance बहिरन्तस्स्फुरद्रसः । It is perfectly intelligible and has an even and soft and melodious flow.

In two other suggestive verses in *Sakuntala* Kalidasa gives us two other beautiful and noble aspects of Art. In the famous verse

मानुषीषु कथं वा स्यादस्य रूपस्य संभवः ।
न प्रभातरलं ज्योतिरुदेति वसुधातलात् ॥ I-22.

he suggests that Art is a product of the spirit of renunciation and the spirit of delight, of earth and heaven, of love of mundane things and supra-mundane things. In the equally famous verse भुक्त्वाचिराय, etc., (IV, 19) he suggests that the true ideal of Art is to lead a righteous life of power on earth and to the peace of meditation and renunciation as the crown of a life of ethical and political service. In the character of *Sakuntala* he symbolises not only Beauty aud Love but Art as well, just as in the character of Bharata he suggests not only glory and power but heroism and patriotism as well.

I do not think it necessary to enter into further æsthetical discussion here. Kalidasa is supreme in the delineation of the Sringara rasa (the emotion of love) which is called the king of the rasas. But he excels also in the description of pathos (Karuna), heroism (vira), peace (santi) and the marvellous (adbhuta). His power of suggestiveness (Dhvani) is remarkable. The well-known verse in Kumara-sambava (V-24)

स्थिताः क्षणं पक्ष्मसु ताडिताधराः
पयोधरोत्सङ्गनिपातचूर्णिताः ।

वलीषु तस्याः स्खलिताः प्रपेदिरे
चिरेण नाभिं प्रथमोदबिन्दवः ॥

and the equally well-known verse in Kumarasambhava VI-84.

लीलाकमलपत्राणि गणयामास पार्वती ।

have been discussed and admired by Indian writers on Aesthetics. The commencement of Act V in Sakuntala has a wonderful suggestiveness (Dhvani or Anuranana) in regard to the melancholy and the grief which consumed the king after he knew the truth about Sakuntala subsequent to the recovery of the ring. His other works also are full of this charm of subtle suggestiveness.

There is not much in Kalidasa's works to show his interest in architecture and sculpture. But his description of palatial structures in his Meghasandesa is interesting and shows how he belonged to a great epoch which was conspicuous for its achievements in the above arts as well. In the second part of Meghasandesa he describes the buildings in Alaka and says that they are full of fine paintings and have floors inlaid with precious stones and are many storeys in height. The Yaksha's house has a finely

painted entrance and has got also beautiful gardens and lotus tanks and a small pleasure hillock attached to it and the pet peacock was housed on a golden resting-place. *Sakuntala* and the other two plays show that the palaces had a durbar hall, a sacrificial hall, beautiful gardens, art galleries, music halls, theatre halls etc. In Raghuvamsa canto XVI there is a grand description of the renovation of Ayodhya by architects working in a sacramental spirit, and the poet says that the city shone like a maiden decked with jewels from head to foot.

We get from *Malavikagnimitra* and *Sakuntala* a clearer idea about Kalidasa's views on painting. In the former play the poet decribes how the king's love was kindled by a sight of the painting of *Malavika*. In Sakuntala the poet says that a painting should be such as to make us forget by its beauty and life-like vividness the painted object itself. The painter should lose himself in his creation and it should and would become alive for him. The king says after seeing his painting of *Sakuntala*

दर्शनसुखमनुभवतः साक्षादिव तन्मयेन हृदयेन ।
स्मृतिकारिणा त्वया मे पुनरपि चित्रीकृता कान्ता ॥

(My heart, intent on her portrait, felt as if it was in the presence of herself. By your reminding me that it was only a picture, I feel as if you have reduced a dynamic loveliness into a static loveliness).

Kalidasa's main interest lay in music and dance and poesy and hence his works are full of fine æsthetic ideas in regard to those fine arts. He refers to Toorya (Raghuvamsa XVII-11) Muraja (Meghasandesa I-60, II-1) Pushkara (Meghasandesa II-5, Malvikagnimitra I-21) Vallaki or Vina (Raghuvamsa XIX, 13, Meghasandesa II-25), Mridanga (Malvikagnimitra Act I, Raghuvamsa XIX, 5) Mardala (Ritusamhara II-1) etc. The combination of flute and human voice and Muraja is described in Meghasandesa I, 60. In Act V of Sakuntala we have a fine description of vocal music and musical improvisation. The king who is a keen lover of music cries out on hearing Hamsapadika's song अहो रागपरिवाहिनी गीतिः। Even the Vidushaka is rapt above himself by that song and says:—
भो वयस्य संगीतशालान्तरे अवधानं देहि। कलविशुद्धाया गीतेः स्वरसंयोगः श्रूयते।

Kalidasa's poems refer frequently to the *Vina*

and the *flute* which seem to have been his favourite instruments. He refers also to *Tala* and *Laya*. In Sakuntala he refers to Hamsapadika's singing *varnas*. In Kumarasambhava he refers to the practice of singing the *Kaisika* tune to awaken a person in the morning (VIII, 85). He knew also the psychological effects of music. In the famous verse रम्याणि वीक्ष्य etc. in Sakuntala he utters a profound truth in a charming manner which anticipates Shelley's famous line "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought." That Kalidasa had a keen ear for the musical notes of birds is clear also from the following stanza in Raghuvamsa (I, 39)

मनोभिरामाः शृण्वन्तौ रथनेमिस्वनोन्मुखैः ।
षड्जसंवादिनीः केका द्विधा भिन्नाः शिखण्डिभिः ॥

The poet says that on hearing the thunder-like sound of swift-moving chariot wheels, the peacocks uttered the shadja note in its two concordant variations. Mallinatha: says that they are like the Suddha and Vikrita forms of the shadja or chyuta and achyuta forms of the shadja note. The following passages in Malavikagnimitra show that he knew well musical technicalities.

देव शर्मिष्ठायाः कृतिर्लयमध्या चतुष्पदा ।

जीमूतस्तनितविशङ्किभिर्मयूरै-
कद्ग्रीवैरनुरसितस्य पुष्करस्य ।
निर्ह्रादिन्युपहितमध्यमस्वरोत्था
मायूरी मदयति मार्जना मनांसि ॥ (1-21)

Mayuri Marjana is the technical term for a particular mode of tuning the mridanga. Bharata mentions three such modes *i.e.* Mayuri, Ardhamayuri and Karmaravi which were employed in connection with the shadja, madhyama and gandhara gramas.

That Kalidasa took a keen delight in the arts of dance and gesture and drama is abundantly clear from his works. In Kumarasambhava (VII-90), he describes Siva and Parvati as watching a drama performed in honour of their marriage. He knew that these arts are arts of expression. He says in Malavikagnimitra (Act I)

प्रयोगप्रधानं हि नाट्यशास्त्रम् ।

He says also that the art of dance is the sacrificial ceremony dear to the eyes of the Gods, that God Siva and Goddess Parvati showed to the world

the two aspects of the art, that all the emotions can be rendered by the art, and that it is the one common source of joy to persons of diverse and divergent tastes.

देवानामिदमामनन्ति मुनयः कान्तं क्रतुं चाक्षुषं
रुद्रेणेदमुमाकृतव्यतिकरे स्वाङ्गे विभक्तं द्विधा ।
त्रैगुण्योद्भवमत्र लोकचरितं नानारसं दृश्यते
नाट्यं भिन्नरुचेर्जनस्य बहुधाप्येकं समाराधनम् ॥

(Malavikagnimitra Act I, verse 24)

Thus dance is not the mere posturing of a passing mood. It is the eloquent but silent expression by the whole body in respect of the whole feeling which dominates the heart. The word *Nanarasa* in the above verse shows how in the arts of dance and drama the vital element is *Rasa*. The importance of Bhava (emotional mood) and its proper rendering is well brought out in the same play in Act II verse 8 :

अङ्गैरन्तर्निहितवचनैः सूचितः सम्यगर्थः
पादन्यासो लयमुपगतस्तन्मयत्वं रसेषु ।
शाखायोनिर्मृदुरभिनयस्तद्विकल्पानुवृत्तौ
भावो भावं नुदति विषयाद्रागबन्धः स एव ॥

This shows how song and gesture and dance should be a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity, how time and tune should go together, how the artist should lose himself in the mood, and how mood should chase mood but yet the sweetness should be the same. The human body in its feminine grace and loveliness as an instrument of the art of dance is beautifully described in Malavikagnimitra Act II verses 3 and 6. The art of dance as taught by Bharata to the celestial damsels (apsaras) is thus described in Vikramorvasiya Act II verse 17.

मुनिना भरतेन यः प्रयोगो
भवतीष्वष्टरसाश्रयो निबद्धः ॥

Kalidasa knew also that the dancer should not be over-decorated and that the eloquence of form and looks and gesture is greatest when the decoration is but slight and tasteful and the natural beauty of the frame is set off without being encumbered by it. In Malavikagnimitra he says :

सर्वाङ्गसौष्ठवाभिव्यक्तये विरलनेपथ्ययोः पात्रयोः प्रवे-
शोऽस्तु ।

Kalidasa knew also how the combination of vocal

and instrumental music and dance gives us exquisite delight if the emotions (Bhava and Rasa) are perfectly realised and rendered.

" सुसन्धिबन्धं ननृतुः सुवृत्तगीतानुगं भावरसानुविद्धम् ॥
(Kumarasambhava XI, 36)

He was never tired of praising the ever-varying and infinite grace of gesture. In Raghuvamsa he sings of सलैयैरिव पाणिभि: (IX, 35). Though dance as a social amusement was not much cared for in India, dance as an art—it is now a forgotten art and survives mostly as hop and jump and finger-shake—was cultivated in India to the highest point of perfcetion. India knew also well religious group dances (*e.g.* Rasalila). But her special excellence was in *abhinaya* or pose and gesture—an art unknown elsewhere in the world.

With such an equipment it is no wonder that Kalidasa excelled in poetry and drama. His poems and plays abound in exquisite delineations of the *Rasas* and are full of the magic of *dhvani.* In the Vikramorvasiya he says that even gods in heaven are fond of dramatic performances and assembled to witness Lakshmi Svayamvara. In Act II verse 17

of that play he refers to the eight *rasas* revealed by Bharata and to Indra's love of the art of dance (Lalitabhinaya). In short the very essence of the Aesthetic is expressed by Kalidasa in his words तन्मयत्वं रसेषु ॥





CHAPTER II

Characteristics of Kalidasa's Poetry.

I shall now proceed to deal with the specific excellences of Kalidasa's art before I begin to deal with some general aspects of his genius. In dealing with them I think that I shall bring out his greatness best by dwelling at some length on each of his special characteristics and excellences. As I am discussing below at some length in later chapters Kalidasa as the poet of nature and as the poet of beauty and as the poet of love, I shall describe here only the other characteristics of his poetry and style.

If we wish to see well "the proud full sail of his great verse" we must know first of all his theory of poetry, and to understand his theory of poetry we must know Indian poetics. I have discussed Indian Poeties in great detail in my recent work on "Indian Æesthetics" and shall describe here only a few general aspects. It has been said

that the way of poesy is not that of a commander or a king (*Prabhu Sammita*) for that is the way of the Veda, that the way of poesy is not that of a comrade and a counsellor (*suhrit sammita*) for that is the way of the Puranas and the Itihasas but that the way of poesy is that of a young and beloved wife (*kanta sammita*). Thus poesy charms us into purity and perfection. Further, the greatest of Indian rhetoricians, Mammata teaches that the poet's speech creates a world which is not bound by the shackles of destiny, which is of the essence of joy, which is self-dependant, and which is sweet with the nine rasas.

नियतिकृतनियमरहितां ह्लादैकमयीमनन्यपरतन्त्राम् ।
नवरसरुचिरां निर्मितिमादधती भारतीकविर्जयति ॥

It has been well said that the word *Kavi* means *Krantadarsi* i.e. one whose vision sees far and high and deep into things. Thus poetry has to be sweet, creative, emotional and revelatory. These Indian concepts of poesy are in full accord with Kalidasa's idea about the nature and function of poesy in life. His view is that poetry is the gate of beauty leading to the inner shrine of bliss by the

shortest and loveliest of routes. In describing Sakuntala by saying that beauty like hers could not be mere mortal loveliness because a radiance full of quivering and incandescent splendour cannot rise from the earth suggests that the soul of beauty and love and joy is human yet super human in its nature. In the verse already quoted from Sakuntala चला-पाङ्गां etc. he shows us how poesy is the maker of life's honey and that its method is the method of enjoyment and intuition and imagination and not the method of the analytical intellect. He realised that poetry is the surging overflow of emotion into expression and says about his great master and exemplar Valmiki that his pity aroused at the sight of the bird wounded by the hunter overflowed the bounds of his heart and coursed along into speech as poesy.

निषादविद्धानुजदर्शनोत्थः श्लोकत्वमापद्यत यस्य शोकः।

Mr. A. B. Keith has spoken with justice and truth in his valuable work on *Sanskrit Classical Literature* about Kalidasa's power of evoking by the brilliance of his description the emotions of love,—both as realised in union and as made poignant by separation,—of pathos, of heroism, and last but not

least for Indian taste, of the wonderful." The sneer in the words "last but not least for Indian taste" is as unmistakeable as it is petty and ill-informed. The taste for the wonderful is not the less admirable on account of its loss in the West. Mr. Keith says also: "The kavya style unquestionably attains in Kalidasa its highest pitch, for in him the sentiment predominates over the ornaments which serve to enhance it instead of overwhelming it. Sentiment is with him the soul of poetry, and fond as he is of the beauty due to the use of figures, he refrains from sacrificing his main purpose in the search for effect.") He shows well how Kalidasa excels also in *Sabdalankaras* (alliteration, paronomasia, *Yamaka* etc.), in which he aims not at mere verbal pyrotechnics but weds sense to sound with skill, and in *arthalamkaras* (figures of speech such as metaphor, simile etc). He says: "The beauty and force of many of his similes and metaphors must be recognised by any one who appreciates poetry. Characteristic is the carrying out of the simile in precise detail, in striking contrast to the Homeric manner where the detail is given as a picture but parallelism is not sought." He praises also the poet's "attribution of life to things inanimate." He

says also : Of the other figures Kalidasa makes free and happy use, especially marked is his skill in the *Arthantaranyasa*, which consists in expressing in a general proposition an idea exhibited in particular form in the preceding three lines of a stanza."

In his recent great work on *A History of Sanskrit literature*, in which he has, with remarkable range and keen critical acumen, presented the panorama of the growth and development of Sanskrit Literature, he says that "in Kalidasa we have unquestionably the finest master of Indian political style," and "he has the fundamental merit that he prefers suggestion to elaboration." He refers also to "the width of Kalidasa's knowledge and the depth of his observation of nature and life." He says further with equal truth and justice : "Of the figures those of sound are employed not rarely but usually with skill. Of figures of sense Kalidasa excels in Indian opinion in the simile, and the praise is just."

I think that the best way of describing the excellences of Kalidasa's poetry is to discuss them from the standpoint of Indian poetics *i.e.* rasa, guna, alamkara etc. and to mingle therewith the discussion

of the form and content of his poetry in the manner familiar to western criticism. Each method is supplementary to the other and is sure to give us a harvest of fine ideas.

I shall first take up his presentation of the emotions (rasas). I have already stated that he is supreme in the delineation of love (Sringara), and that he excels also in the representation of pathos (Karuna), heroism (Vira), the marvellous (Adbhuta), and peace (*Santi*). I am discussing Kalidasa as a poet of love in a later chapter. He does not excel to a high degree in the delineation of the gay and the comic and the ludicrous, though even here his performance is by no means inconsiderable. I may observe here that humour of the finest flavour, the true Attic salt, is not found in Indian literature. It requires abounding animal spirits, a keen perception of the oddities and incongruities and of the magnificences and miseries of life, a commingling of pity and laughter, a willingness to take life as it is with all its pettinesses and potencies, a resoluteness of will never to take life too seriously, a readiness and willingness to let a laugh go against a man as readily and willingness to put another out of face,—

in short a thorough sanity and sweetness and balanced tenderness in relation to the totality of human life. Then only will comic literature become a spectrum of the cosmic Joke—a display in iridiscent language of the fundamental laughableness of life. Great comic literature in prose and verse requires also a language which has been used during generations for comic purposes and which has acquired thereby a power of infinite comic suggestiveness, a capacity for bringing distant facts and ideas together in sparkling contrast, and other elements which are needed for keeping up the campaigns of wit and humour. The English and the French languages excel in these characteristics, and the English-speaking and French-speaking races have the traits described above. The result is that in English and French literatures we have had wonderful conquests of the comic spirit. The Sanskrit Prahasanas alternate between vèrbal tours-de-force and broad farce and occasionally descend into vulgarity and obscenity. It seems to me that the Sanskrit language has been so disciplined into the grand manner that it has never had the lightness and deftness and delicacy of touch and tread needed for masterpieces of humour. The Vernaculars of India—and especially the Tamil

language—have the above elements and are living tongues and have a store of proverbial wisdom full of delicious comic touches. The Indian, though he may not have such high spirits and such a keen comic sense as his French or English brother is in his own way full of vitality and *verve* and can laugh in a gay and wholesome way in the presence of the oddities and grotesque incongruities of life. He has an advantage over his French and English brethren in that he has greater balance and detachment and sanity and sweetness and sympathy in his nature and can hence excel even more in humour than in wit. It is no doubt true that the caste arrogances and quarrels and the religious animosities of Indian life have caused in recent times an exaggerated and false sense of caste honour and sectarian honour, and people feel or seem to feel as if a raw nerve is roughly touched whenever an imaginary being of this or that caste or religion is the subject of comic description or treatment in a work of art. This is a very unfortunate feature which is fatal to the comic art. No comic artist can excel if he is always in fear of press thunders and libel suits and prosecutions. It must be further admitted that our men who are full of bloated self-importance cannot bear

a laugh against themselves. In the west the tallest and highest and proudest in the land do not try to injure or kill the critic or the comic writer or the cartoonist or the caricaturist who holds them up to good-humoured and clever, as opposed to malicious and malignant and evil-hearted and libellous, ridicule. In spite of all these defects the great future Indian comic artists in words or in colours have vast unconquered realms for conquest and annexation. To return from the digression, Kalidasa's perfect artistic sense which was his good genius throughout his life and which enabled him to do perfectly what he could do and not try at all where he could not achieve perfection whispered to him to control and limit himself when he came to the land of laughter. But we see enough from his works to see that he had a keen sense of the comic aspects of life and that such few comic pictures as he has given are excellent and attractive. His strength and his delight lay elsewhere and he was right in not trying to do all things equally well—which means only actually doing all things equally ill.

Thus Kalidasa's humour is limited in range and is never supreme. I may refer here to a few of his

comic pictures. (The jests and comic remarks of the Vidushaka in Malavikagnimitra are of really high quality. He is a more interesting figure than the comic characters in the other two plays.) I have referred in my earlier volume to their characteristic comic remarks and reflections. In the midst of the most serious affairs of life they break in with their calls for food and drink and creature comforts) The Vidushaka in Vikramorvasiya sees the moon to be like a sweetmeat.

ही ही भोः एष खण्डमोदकसदृश उदितो राजा ओषधीशानां ।

The scene where the queen's maidservant extracts the secret out of him is very well described. He says further that he is ugliness *par excellence*, just as Urvasi is loveliness *par excellence*. When the king asks him for the letter of Urvasi, he tells the king that it flew up to heaven with her. He tells Chitralekha that heaven is by no means so lovely and desirable as the earth and that there is nothing to eat or drink there and that beings live there like fish with unwinking eyes.

भवति किं वा स्वर्गो स्मर्तव्यं । न तत्र खाद्यते न पीयते ।

केवलमनिमिषैरक्षिभिर्मीनताऽवलम्ब्यते ॥

He tells Prince Ayus that the boy was already familiar with monkeys in the hermitage and could hence find him to be a familiar object. Madavya's description of hunting in Sakuntala is clever and witty. He tells the king that in his passion for the forest maiden he was like a man who got tired of date fruits and sought for a change in tamarind fruits. He requests the king to save Sakuntala from falling into the hands of some ascetic with dirty matted hair. When the king tells him about Sakuntala's bashfulness, he replies: "Would she on seeing you for the first time come and sit in your lap?" The Vidushaka in Malavikagnimitra is clever and resourceful and full of wit and humour. His inciting of Haradatta and Ganadasa, his description of Parivrajaka as having tresses like moonbeams, his clever ruse to get the queen's signet-ring, and his part in other scenes in the play show the clever way in which the poet has worked out this humorous character in the play. Besides these comic elements we have a few other comic scenes in the plays. Some of the maidservants in the plays are witty characters. Special mention should be made of the witty remarks of *Bakulavalika* in Malavikagnimitra, *Chitralekha* in Vikramorvasiya, and *Priyamvada* in Sakuntala.

I have referred to this fact in my expositions of those plays. In canto V of Kumarasambhava, we have a masterpiece of humorous discription in the disguised Siva's delineation of God Siva. In the same poem have also a humorous description of the dances by Bhringi and Kali.

चलच्छिखाग्रो विकटाङ्गभङ्गः
　　सुदन्तुरः शुक्लसुतीक्ष्णतुण्डः ।
भ्रुवोपदिष्टः स तु शंकरेण
　　तस्या विनोदाय ननर्त भृङ्गी ॥

कण्ठस्थलीलोलकपालमाला
　　दंष्ट्राकरालाननमभ्यनृत्यत ।
प्रीतेन तेन प्रभुणा नियुक्ता
　　काली कलत्रस्य मुदे प्रियस्य ॥

(IX, 48, 49).

(With tossing tuft and fearful twists of body, and tall with a white lank face, Bhringi danced for the amusement of Parvati in response to a commanding lift of the eyebrow by Sankara. Commanded by the happy husband and for the pleasure of his bride, Kali danced with high-tossed skulls strung

round her neck and with a face fearful because of her projecting teeth'.

Kalidasa's representation of the emotion of pathos (Karuna), though it is not so supreme as in Bhavabhuti's masterpiece *Uttararamacharita*, is a high achievement and is remarkable for its reticence and effectiveness. The sorrows of the bereaved Rati are depicted in Kumarasambhava in an elegiac poem which is as remarkable as the canto in *Raghuvamsa* describing the sorrows of the bereaved Aja. We may well say in regard to the effect of these descriptions अपि ग्रावा रोदिति अपि दलति वज्रस्य हृदयं (even a stone will weep and even the heart of a diamond will break). All the wild conflict of feelings — of grief, of self-torment, of self-abasement, of yearning for following the beloved through the gate of death, of anger with death for inflicting the torture of killing one half of a single personality and leaving the other half to writhe in pain, of the sorrow of all in the sorrow of one, of the mystery of death, of the unavoidability of separation by bereavement, of the vanity of all things, of the utter emptiness of life after the passing of the beloved—which torment the breast when one is face to face with the sundering of

life's dearest ties and the extinguishment of life's truest joys is described with a truth and delicate and masterly touch in these cantos. The agony of love's longing when temporarily separated from the beloved by a cruel decree is described in Meghasandesa. Equally fine is the delineation of the pain afflicting the hearts of true lovers when the beloved is put by owing to Rama's fear of personal odium and ruin of public morals and owing to Dushyanta's forgetfulness caused by the sage's curse. In both these cases the heroines come out of the purgation of suffering like pure gold tested by fire. The sorrow felt by Pururavas on losing Urvasi became the very madness of grief which is depicted in a most poetic way in Act IV of Vikramorvasiya. The very essence of the emotion of pity and sorrow is thus expressed by the poet in Raghuvamsa VIII, 43 :

अभितप्तमयोऽपि मार्दवं भजते कैव कथा शरीरिषु ॥

Kalidasa has embodied his ideals of heroism in Raghu, Rama, and Kumara. Raghu was an ideal son and an ideal ruler and an ideal warrior. His *Jaitrayatra or Digvijaya* (career of conquest) is vividly and admiringly pourtrayed in canto IV of Raghuvamsa. The description of his fight with

Indra is a magnificent piece of word-painting. Raghu's gift of all his belongings during his unique *Visvajit* sacrifice is equally well described. This description shows us how Raghu was as great a *Dana Vira* (full of the heroism of munificence) as he was a great *Yuddha Vira* (full of the heroism of military prowess). Kalidasa describes Dilipa as a great *Daya Vira* (full of the heroism of compassion). Dilipa says in noble language that a Kshatriya is he who saves all from harm and pain.

क्षतात्किल त्रायत इत्युदग्रः क्षत्रस्य शब्दो भुवनेषु रूढः ।

Dilipa asks what is the use of sovereignty blemished by the ill-fame of inability or unwillingness to give protection.

राज्येन किं तद्विपरीतवृत्तेः प्राणैरुपक्रोशमलीमसैर्वा ॥

Rama is incarnate God as well as the ideal man in all respects and Kalidasa depicts him with delighted devotion. The poet's highest rapture of love of heroism is found in his description of God Subrahmanya. His delight in depicting heroism in boyhood is seen in his pictures of Bharata and Ayus. It could be and was given full opportu-

nity and satisfaction in depicting Kumara. When the gods vied with each other in backing out of heaven lest they should encounter the demon Taraka, God Subrahmanya replies with fearless looks : "Do not be afraid. Enter heaven without fear. Let the demon face me even here". He goes to the battle-ground as to a playground and frees the world from oppression as if he is playing a pleasant boyish game of skill.

दृष्ट्वा युगान्तदहनप्रतिमां मुमोच
शक्तिं प्रमोदविकसद्वदनारविन्दः ॥

I may mention further here that Kalidasa has given us a sweet and subtle and suggestive delineation of *Vira rasa* in *Sakuntala*. In Sakuntala, I, 10 and 11 the poet suggests that the true crown and glory of heroism is the protection of the oppressed (आर्तत्राण). He suggests also that a child conceived in the peace and purity of a hermitage and brought up in simplicity in the pure domain of heaven and then brought into the seat of power, like Bharata, would be the true hero, the Happy Warrior. He alone will be pure and radiant and full of prowess and glory like the sun (तनयमाचि-

रात्प्राचीवार्कं प्रसूय च पावनं Act IV, verse 18). He alone will be unparallelled in might and will conquer and rule the world. (अप्रतिरथ Act IV, verse 19— पुरा सप्तद्वीपां जयति वसुधामप्रतिरथः Act VII, verse 33). He is in fact *Sarvadamana* (all-subduer) first and *Bharata* (all-protector) afterwards. Thus though it might seem an astounding view, it seems to me that, though the play is primarily devoted to *Sringara* (love), there is an under-current, a minor note, of the sentiment of heroism in the play, because that love alone is noble love which not only gives the largesse of exquisite delight but is also the creator of the spirit of heroism.

Kalidasa's representation of *Adbhuta rasa* (the marvellous)—which competes with Sringara in our Alamkara works for the position of the premier rasa—abounds in beauty and sublimity. All his works are replete with it. He however had too keen and vigilant an artistic sense to allow the emotion to run riot. He never fails to purge it of all violent extravagance and to relate it to human life. The Kumbhodara episode in Raghuvamsa, and the Raghu-Indra fight and the Kusa-Kumuda fight in the same poem, are interesting. The description of Alaka in

Meghasandesa is itself a piece of marvel. Vikramorvasiya and Sakuntala abound in delicate touches depicting the marvellous. Vikrama's valour, the aerial flights of Chitraleka and Urvasi, and the Tiraskarini Vidya and the Sangamaniya gem in Vikramorvasiya, and the flight of Menaka taking Sakuntala with her, and the Hemakuta incidents in the last Act in Sakuntala are very delicately and attractively described. But it is in Kumarasambhava that we find a whole universe of marvels and wonders.

Kalidasa excels even more in the delineation of peace (Santi) and bhakti (devotion). The orthodox number of rasas is eight. Santi Rasa was admitted as the ninth later on. Bhakti Rasa won its seat later. I have discussed all this in my work on Indian Aesthetics.* I am describing Kalidasa's religious ideas later on in this work. The Santi rasa is beautifully described in cantos I and V and VIII of Raghuvamsa, in the description of the penances of Siva and Parvati in Kumarasambhava, and in the delineation of the hermitages of Kanva

* Indian Aesthetics by K. S. Ramaswamy Sastrigal, Cr. 8vo. Rs. 2. Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam.

and Maricha in Sakuntala. The hymns to Brahma in canto II of Kumarasambhava, and to Vishnu in canto X of Raghuvamsa and to Siva in canto XII of Kumarasambhava and the many and marvellous individual verses in praise of God in the poems and the plays in many places breathe a lofty spirit of exalted devotion. The very heart of each of these two emotions is expressed in Kumarasambhava, VI, 55.

मूढं बुद्धमिवात्मानं हैमीभूतमिवायसम् ।
भूमेर्दिवमिवारूढं मन्ये भवदनुग्रहात् ॥

(By your grace I feel like an ignorant man dowered with wisdom, like iron transformed into gold, and like a man lifted from earth to heaven).

The poet's representation of the Raudra (fury), Bhayanaka (fear), and Bheebatsa (Disgust) rasas is slight and occasional and rare. He depicts the Raudra rasa in relation to Rudra Himself when he reduces Kama to ashes. The other two rasas are described in a meagre way in the 15th and 16th cantos of Kumarasambhava. But the poet's emphasis was always on the higher and nobler *rasas* of the soul.

I have already referred to Kalidasa's power of suggestiveness (*dhvani or vyangya*). In my earlier

volume I have shown the manifestations of this wonderful power in each individual work. Kalidasa has not only the power of evoking secondary and suggested sentiments in individual stanzas but also the power of compressing and concentrating the entire artistic significance and emotional intention of each poem and play in the opening passages or verses. I shall show later on the instances of such power in his plays. (In Meghasandesa, as already shown by me, he has packed the very quintessence of the poem in the words कान्ता, अस्तंगमितमहिमा, जनकतनयास्नानपुण्योदकेषु and रामगिर्याश्रमेषु which occur in the very first stanza. Equally significant and suggestive are the words *Devatatma* and *Mana Danda* in the first stanza in *Kumarasambhava*. The noble verses in the first canto of Raghuvamsa descriptive of the kings of the solar race contain in essence the significance of the expansive narratives in the later cantos. At the same time he does not fall into the error—so frequently seen in later poets—of straining after secondary meanings to the detriment of the primary significance. The *Vyangya* (suggested) sense must follow and transcend and sweeten the *vachya* (expressed) sense and not hustle or subdue or suppress it. In Kalidasa the element of *dhvani* is

like the secondary rainbow which co-exists with the primary rainbow and adds an element of evanescent and spiritual grace, and which is best described by his own words in Meghasandesa, because Dhvani shines with the iridiscent irradiation (*sphurita ruchi*) of the rainbow on the dark rain-cloud of speech and is attractive like the plume of peacock feathers on the head of Krishna.

येन श्यामं वपुरतितरां कान्तिमापत्स्यते ते ।
बर्हेणेव स्फुरितरुचिना गोपवेषस्य विष्णोः ॥

Proceeding now to consider Kalidasa's poetry from the aspect of *Gunas*, it is easy to realise that the higher and rarer gunas (qualities) of his poesy are remarkable in their fulness and attractiveness. The *gunas* of poesy have been thus described by Vidyanatha :

श्लेषः प्रसादस्समता माधुर्यं सुकुमारता ।
अर्थव्यक्तिरुदारत्वं तथा कान्तिरुदात्तता ॥

ओजस्सुशब्दता प्रेमानौर्जित्यमथ विस्तरः ।
समाधिः सौक्ष्म्यगांभीर्ये संक्षेपो भाविकं तथा ।
संमितत्वं तथा प्रौढी रीतिरुक्तिर्गतिस्तथा ॥

The list of *gunas*, like the list of alamkaras (figures of speech), went on growing with the growth of time and the development of aesthetic theory in India. The earlier writers on Aesthetics referred to ten gunas. Bharata, Dandi and Vamana describe them as Ojas, Prasada, Slesha, Samata, Samadhi, Madhurya, Saukumarya, Udarata, Arthavyakti, and Kanti. Dandi says that these ten gunas are of the essence of the Vaidarbhi riti (style). In Kalidasa's works these qualities abound, and they increase the attractiveness and charm of his poems and plays. He excels particularly in Prasada, Madhurya, Saukumarya, Udattata, Arthavyakti and Kanti. (Simplicity, sweetness and distinctness of words, euphonious softness and gentleness of sound, glory of descriptive phrase, clarity of thought and expression, and splendour of style).

He excels in Alamkaras or figures of speech. This again can but be briefly indicated here. If I were to take up each figure of speech and show how he has given perfect stanzas illumined by that figurative expression, this portion of the book alone will swell into a volume. It will be a delightful task for one interested in Rhetoric and

Aesthetics to write a separate book on Kalidasa as a master of Rhetoric. Kalidasa specially excels in the four most important of the figures of speech *viz.*, natural description (svabhavokti), metaphor (rupaka), simile (upama) and poetic fancy (utpreksha). The description of the flight of the deer and the speed of the horse in Act I of Sakuntala are deservedly famous. The poet's description of the phenomena of nature will be referred to by me in the next chapter. I shall here refer only to a most life-like and vivid description of a dove in canto IX of Kumarasambhava. I have not come across any description in any literature which can come anywhere near it.

सुकान्तकान्तामणितानुकारं कूजन्तमाघूर्णितरक्तनेत्रम् ।
प्रस्फारितोन्नम्रविनम्रकण्ठं मुहुर्मुहुर्न्यञ्चितचारुपुच्छम् ॥
विशृङ्खलं पक्षतियुग्ममीषद्दधानमानन्दगतिं मदेन ।
शुभ्रांशुवर्णं जटिलाग्रपादमितस्ततो मण्डलकैश्चरन्तम् ॥
रतिद्वितीयेन मनोभवेन हृदात्सुधायाः प्रविगाह्यमानात् ।
तं वीक्ष्य फेनस्य चयं नवोत्थमिवाभ्यनन्दत्क्षणमिन्दुमौलिः ॥

(With sounds sweet like the inarticulate cries of delight of a damsel in her nuptial night, with red

eyes rolling gently this way and that, with its shining neck expanded and contracted and arched and raised and bent, with its tail gracefully wagged up and down, unfettered in the movements of its wings with graceful steps full of sportive pride, white and radiant like the moon, with tufted forefeet, flying around in graceful circles, and shining like the foam newly thrown up during the bath of Kama and Rati in a pool of nectar—there appeared a dove to the delight of the moon-crested-God). Kalidasa's supreme greatness in metaphor and simile is so well-known and universally admitted that we need not pause to show it. A familiar Sanskrit saying is उपमा कालिदासस्य (Kalidasa is supreme in handling the simile).

उपमा कालिदासस्य भारवेरर्थगौरवम् ।
दण्डिनः पदलालित्यं माघे सन्ति त्रयो गुणाः ॥

The originality, appropriateness and beauty of his similes are truly remarkable. The similes are drawn from the entire range of the beauty of creation including within such creation both creations of nature and creations of art. We see in him that fine frenzy of the poetic vision which is able to find by

intuitive processes of imagination the inner nearness of things which seem far to others, the innate affinities of entities which seem to other minds and eyes to be disconnected, the inborn resemblances of things which appear to others to be dissimilar and alike. Things which are sundered by space and time are brought together into nearness and unity in the fusing heat of his imagination. Such a style so rich in metaphor and simile is seen nowhere else in the world's poetry except in Shakespeare. Kalidasa further equals Milton in the learning and sublimity shown in the use of metaphor and simile. It has been well said : "But it is the range and variety of his similitudes which is all the more amazing. He derives his similes from all conceivable objects, natural and supernatural, mundane and ultra-mundane, earthly and heavenly, real and imaginary, subjective and objective, concrete and abstract. Even language, science, grammar, sruti and smriti are indented upon for this purpose. In fact similes spring up like flowers before his tread, come out like singing birds from the thicket, or grow like clouds upon the sky." It is invidious and difficult to attempt a selection when there is such a bewildering abundance. I shall however give a few examples here.

रेवां द्रक्ष्यस्युपलविषमे विन्ध्यपादे विशीर्णाम्
भक्तिच्छेदैरिव विरचितां भूतिमङ्गे गजस्य ॥

(Meghaduta I, 19)

स्वल्पीभूते सुचरितफले स्वर्गिणां गां गतानाम् ।
शेषैः पुण्यैः कृतमिव दिवः कान्तिमत्खण्डमेकम् ॥

(Do. I, 31)

तां हंसमालाः शरदीव गङ्गां महौषधिं नक्तमिवात्मभासः ।
स्थिरोपदेशामुपदेशकाले प्रपेदिरे प्राक्तनजन्मविद्याः ॥

(Kumarasambhava I, 30)

असंभृतं मण्डनमङ्गयष्टेरनासवाख्यं करणं मदस्य ।
कामस्य पुष्पव्यतिरिक्तमस्त्रं बाल्यात्परं साथ वयः प्रपेदे ॥

उन्मीलितं तूलिकयेव चित्रं सूर्यांशुभिर्भिन्नमिवारविन्दम् ।
बभूव तस्याश्चतुरस्रशोभि वपुर्विभक्तं नवयौवनेन ॥

(Do. I, 31 & 32)

स्वरेण तस्याममृतस्रुतेव प्रजल्पितायामभिजातवाचि ।
अप्यन्यपुष्टाप्रतिकूलशब्दा श्रोतुर्वितन्त्रीरिव ताड्यमाना ॥

(Do. I, 45)

अते कृशानोर्न हि मन्त्रपूतमर्हन्ति तेजांस्यपराणि हव्यम् ।

(Do. I, 51)

अवृष्टिसंरंभमिवांबुवाहमपामिवाधारमनुत्तरङ्गम् ।
अन्तश्चराणां मरुतां निरोधान्निवातनिष्कंपमिव प्रदीपम् ॥

(Do. III, 48)

गगनादवतीर्णा सा यथा वृद्धपुरःसरा ।
तोयान्तर्भास्करालीव रेजे मुनिपरंपरा ॥

(Do. VI, 49)

तं यथात्मसदृशं वरं वधूरन्वरज्यत वरस्तथैव ताम् ।
सागरादनपगा हि जाह्नवी सोऽपि तन्मुखरसैकवृत्तिभाक् ॥

(Do. VIII, 16)

हैमी फलं हेमगिरेर्लतेव विकस्वरं नाकनदीव पद्मम् ।
पूर्वेव दिङ्नूतनमिन्दुमाभात्तं पार्वतीनन्दनमादधाना ॥

(Do. XI, 26)

देवोऽपि दैत्यविशिखप्रकरं सचापं
बाणैश्चकर्त कणशो रणकेलिकारी ।
योगीव योगविधिशुष्कमना यमाद्यैः
सांसारिकं विषयसंघममोघवीर्यम् ॥

(Do. XVII, 47)

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 1)

अथवा कृतवाग्द्वारे वंशेऽस्मिन्पूर्वसूरिभिः ।
मणौ वज्रसमुत्कीर्णे सूत्रस्येवास्ति मे गतिः ॥

(Do. I, 4)

वैवस्वतो मनुर्नाम माननीयो मनीषिणाम् ।
आसीन्महीक्षितामाद्यः प्रणवश्छन्दसामिव ॥

(Do. I, 11)

प्रजानामेव भूत्यर्थं स ताभ्यो बलिमग्रहीत् ।
सहस्रगुणमुत्स्रष्टुमादत्ते हि रसं रविः ॥

(Do. I, 18)

स सेनां महतीं कर्षन् पूर्वसागरगामिनीम् ।
बभौ हरजटाभ्रष्टां गङ्गामिव भगीरथः ॥

(Do. IV. 30)

न कारणात्स्वाद्बिभिदे कुमारः प्रवर्तितो दीप इव प्रदीपात्

(Do. V, 37)

संचारिणी दीपशिखेव रात्रौ यं यं व्यतीयाय पतिंवरा सा ।
नरेन्द्रमार्गाट्ट इव प्रपेदे विवर्णभावं स स भूमिपालः ॥

(Do. VI, 67)

दृष्टा विचिन्वता तेन लङ्कायां राक्षसीवृता ।
जानकीविषवल्लीभिः परीतेव महौषधिः ॥

(Do. XII, 61)

एषा प्रसन्नस्तिमितप्रवाहा सरिद्विदूरान्तरभावतन्वी ।
मन्दाकिनी भाति नगोपकण्ठे मुक्तावली कण्ठगतेव भूमेः ॥
(Do. XIII, 48)

आनन्दजः शोकजमश्रु बाष्पस्तयोरशीतं शिशिरो बिभेद ।
गङ्गासरय्वोर्जलमुष्णतप्तं हिमाद्रिनिस्यन्द इवावतीर्णः ॥
(Do. XIV, 3)

पूराबभासे विपणिस्थपण्या सर्वाङ्गनद्धाभरणेव नारी ।
(Do. XVI, 41)

मङ्गलालंकृता देवी कौशिक्या यतिवेषया ।
त्रयी विग्रहवत्येव सममध्यात्मविद्यया ॥
(Malavikagnimitra, Act I, verse 14)

भाग्यास्तमयमिवाक्ष्णोर्हृदयस्य महोत्सवावसानमिव ।
द्वारपिधानमिव धृतेर्मन्ये तस्यास्तिरस्करिणीम् ॥
(Do. Act II, 11)

आविर्भूते शशिनि तमसा मुच्यमानेव रात्रि-
नैशस्यार्चिर्हुतभुज इव छिन्नभूयिष्ठधूमा ।
मोहेनान्तर्वरतनुरियं लक्ष्यते मुक्तकल्पा
गङ्गा रोधःपतनकलुषा गृह्णतीव प्रसादम् ॥
(Vikramorvasiya Act, I, Verse 9)

यावत्पुनरियं सुभ्रूरुत्सुकाभिः समुत्सुका ।
सखीभिर्याति संपर्कं लताभिः श्रीरिवार्तवी ॥

(Do. I, 14)

तरंगभ्रूभङ्गा क्षुभितविहगश्रेणिरशना
विकर्षन्ती फेनं वसनमिव संरंभशिथिलम् ।
पदाविद्धं यान्ती स्खलितमभिसंधाय बहुशो
नदीभावेनेयं ध्रुवमसहमाना परिणता ॥

(Do. Act IV, 52)

आश्वासितस्य मम नाम सुतोपलब्ध्या
सद्यस्त्वया सह कृशोदरि विप्रयोगः ।
व्यावर्तितातपरुजः प्रथमाभ्रवृष्ट्या
वृक्षस्य वैद्युत इवाग्निरुपस्थितोऽयम् ॥

(Do. V, 16)

आशङ्कसे यदग्निं तदिदं स्पर्शक्षमं रत्नम् ॥

(Sakuntala Act I verse 24)

गच्छति पुरः शरीरं धावति पश्चादसंस्तुतं चेतः ।
चीनांशुकमिव केतोः प्रतिवातं नीयमानस्य ॥

(Do. I, 29)

अनाघ्रातं पुष्पं किसलयमलूनं कररुहै-
रनाविद्धं रत्नं मधु नवमनास्वादितरसम् ।

अखण्डं पुण्यानां फलमिव च तद्रूपमनघं
न जाने भोक्तारं कमिह समुपस्थास्यति विधिः ॥
(Do. II, 10)

काञ्चिदवगुण्ठनवती नातिपरिस्फुटशरीरलावण्या ।
मध्ये तपोधनानां किसलयमिव पाण्डुपत्राणाम् ॥
(Do. V, 13)

इदमुपनतमेवं रूपमक्लिष्टकान्ति
प्रथमपरिगृहीतं स्यान्न वेत्यव्यवस्यन् ।
भ्रमर इव विभाते कुन्दमन्तस्तुषारं
न च खलु परिभोक्तुं नैव शक्नोमि हातुम् ॥
(Do. V, 19)

साक्षात्प्रियामुपगतामपहाय पूर्वं
चित्रार्पितां पुनरिमां बहु मन्यमानः ।
स्रोतोवहां पथि निकामजलामतीत्य
जातः सखे प्रणयवान्मृगतृष्णिकायाम् ॥
(Do. VI, 16)

ज्वलति चलितेन्धनोऽग्निर्विप्रकृतः पन्नगः फणां कुरुते ।
प्रायः स्वं महिमानं क्षोभात्प्रतिपद्यते हि जनः ॥
(Do. VI, 30)

अलोभ्यवस्तुप्रणयप्रसारितो
विभाति जालग्रथिताङ्गुलिः करः ।

अलक्ष्यपत्रान्तरमिद्धरागया
नवोष्णसा भिन्नमिवैकपंकजम् ॥

(Do. VII, 16)

I must stop here because this search for the best among many first-rate examples of metaphor and simile is an oppressive weight on the mind. If one wants to realise Kalidasa's perfection of taste in his metaphors and similes and poetic fancies one cannot do better than compare two verses—one by Kalidasa, and the other by Bhavabhuti, who was in his own way a great poet and play-wright and one of the greatest masters of style.

इदं किलाव्याजमनोहरं वपु-
स्तपःक्षमं साधयितुं य इच्छति ।
ध्रुवं स नीलोत्पलपत्रधारया
समिल्लतां छेत्तुमृषिर्व्यवस्यति ॥

(Sakuntala I, 16)

नैसर्गिकी सुरभिणः कुसुमस्य सिद्धा ।
मूर्ध्नि स्थितिर्न मुसलैरवताडनानि ॥

(Bhavabhuti.)

I shall take up here for illustration only one another figure of speech (viz., poetic fancy—Utpre-

ksha). About this figure of speech, it is said in works on Aesthetics : उत्प्रेक्षा हरति स्वान्तं अचिरोढा वधूरिव (Utpreksha captivates the mind like a young and fair new-wedded bride). Very, very rarely in Kalidasa's works do we come across elaborate conceits which do not contain real beauty or charm and show a mere trifling with thoughts or a dallying with words. His rich and glowing and vivid imagination and his wonderful sureness and delicacy of taste and his ever-active artistic vigilance enabled him to give us a succession of apt and appropriate and attractive poetic ideas and fancies. I give here a few illustrations.

चित्रे निवेश्य परिकल्पितसत्त्वयोगा
  रूपोच्चयेन मनसा विधिना कृता नु ।
स्त्रीरत्नसृष्टिरपरा प्रतिभाति सा मे
  धातुर्विभुत्वमनुचिन्त्य वपुश्च तस्याः ॥

(Sakuntala, II, 9)

अङ्गुलीभिरिव केशसंचयं संनिगृह्य तिमिरं मरीचिभिः ।
कुड्मलीकृतसरोजलोचनं चुम्बतीव रजनीमुखं शशी ॥

(Kumarasambhava, VIII, 63)

एतदुच्छ्वसितपीतमैन्दवं सोढुमक्षममिव प्रभारसम् ।
मुक्तषट्पदविरावमञ्जसा भिद्यते कुमुदमा निबन्धनात् ॥
(Do. Do. 70)

एष चारुमुखियोगतारया युज्यते तरलबिंबया शशी ।
साध्वसादुपगतप्रकम्पया कन्ययेव नवदीक्षया वरः ॥
(Do. Do. 73)

तस्माद्गच्छेरनुकनखलं शैलराजावतीर्णां
जह्नोः कन्यां सगरतनयस्वर्गसोपानपङ्क्तिम् ।
गौरीवक्त्रे भ्रुकुटिरचनां या विहस्येव फेनैः
शंभोः केशग्रहणमकरोदिन्दुलग्नोर्मिहस्ता ॥
(Meghasandesa I, 50)

तस्योत्सङ्गे प्रणयिन इव स्रस्तगङ्गादुकूलां
न त्वं दृष्ट्वा न पुनरलकां ज्ञास्यसे कामचारिन् ।
या वः काले वहति सलिलोद्गारमुच्चैर्विमानै-
र्मुक्ताजालग्रथितमलकं कामिनीवाभ्रवृन्दम् ॥
(Do. I, 63)

Kalidasa excels in other figures of speech also but I must curb my desire to illustrate further. He specially excels in that figure of speech which Ruskin has described by the name of *pathetic fallacy* and which shows nature to be in sympathy with

and in response to the human moods. The most extraordinary example of this is in the IV Act of *Sakuntala*.

Kalidasa excels not only in figures of speech (arthalamkaras) but also in verbal graces of style (Sabdalamkaras) such as Anuprasa, Yamaka etc. Though he never descends to those tricks of style which aim at novelties of sound resulting in paronomasia and pun and double meanings and which are not in union with beauty or nobility or originality of thought, yet he is a master of assonance and alliteration and inter-linked harmonies of sound. The 9th canto in Raghuvamsa is a splendid example of this. Rhyme is of little importance in Sanskrit poetry.

Kalidasa is also a master of metrical expression and harmony of verse. Sanskrit poetry rejoices in the possession of a considerable variety of metrical forms. Kalidasa has pressed into service the most beautiful of them. The Sanskrit metres are mostly regulated by the number and position of syllables and contain provision for the cæsura pause (यति). Some of them have a quantitative basis. Kalidasa's favourite metres are Upajati, Mandakranta, Anushtup and Arya. Upajati includes the Indra Vajra and

Upendra Vajra metres. It enables the poet to combine variety and melody. A western critic remarks: "In these particulars, no poem in any language can compete as regards singularity, charm of originality, and highly wrought finish,—with the Raghuvamsa, Meghaduta, and others...And yet the grand sonorous lines echo through the gallery of time with a rhythmical vibration, which can never be forgotten. Even the great Homeric hexametres read tamely by the side of the *Indra Vajra* lines of Kalidasa, whose exuberant genius runs riot in the unlimited use of melodious homophones". His Anushtup and Arya metres are memorable for dignity and cadence. About his use of the Mandakranta metre Professor Wilson has well said: "The metre combines melody and dignity in a very extraordinary manner and will bear an advantageous comparison in both respects with the poetry of any language living or dead." About the metre as used by him it has been said well: "It dashes along like the racing billows of the sea. It swells into fulness like the tide; and the ocean-roll of its rhythm majestically moves on from the beginning to the end."

One test of the greatness of a poet's work is

the extent to which it has gone into the national consciousness and his wise and lovely words have become a portion of the ingrained wisdom of the people as a whole. I have already shown in my earlier volume how Kalidasa was a poet's poet and what was the extent of his vast influence over his successors. I have shown also how he was a philosopher's poet as well and how the great Kumarila refers to him. But Kalidasa is also a people's poet and many are the expressions which have gone into the hearts of the people and become a portion of their intellectual and emotional and moral and spiritual being and life. In this respect also, as in other respects, he resembles Shakespeare who not only influenced poets and thinkers but the people as a whole. The following are a few illustrations of this superb power of Kalidasa :

कामं खलु सर्वस्य कुलविद्या बहुमता ।

(Malavikagnimitra, Act, I)

सुशिक्षितोऽपि सर्वः उपदेशेन निष्णातो भवति ।

(Do. Do.)

अहो सर्वास्ववस्थासु चारुता शोभां पुष्यति ।

(Do. Act, II)

निसर्गनिपुणाः स्त्रियः । (Do. Act, II)

अनुरागो अनुरागेण प्रत्येष्टव्यः । (Do. Act, III)

कुतूहलवानपि निसर्गशालीनः स्त्रीजनः ।(Do. Act, IV)

अस्ति खलु लोकप्रवादः आगामिसुखं दुःखं वा हृदयसमवस्था कथयतीति । (Do. Act, V)

अहो परिभवोपहारिणो विनिपाताः । (Do. Act, V)

अनुत्सेकः खलु विक्रमालङ्कारः ।

(Vikramorvasiya, Act, I)

नाम्त्यगतिर्मनोरथानाम् । (Do. Act, II)

यदेवोपनतं दुःखात्सुखं तद्रसवत्तरम् ।
निर्वाणाय तरुच्छाया तप्तस्य हि विशेषतः ॥

(Do. Act, III)

महदपि परदुःखं शीतलं सम्यगाहुः । (Do. Act, IV)

अनिर्वेदप्राप्याणि श्रेयांसि । (Do. Do.)

आर्त्रत्राणाय वः शस्त्रं न प्रहर्तुमनागसि ॥

(Sakuntala Act, I)

कामी स्वतां पश्यति । (Do. Act, II)

सर्वः कान्तमात्मानं पश्यति । (Do. Do.)

स्नेहः पापशङ्की । (Do. Act, IV)

भवितव्यता खलु बलवती (Do. Act, VI)

अनतिक्रमणीयानि श्रेयांसि । (Do. Act, VII)

किमीश्वराणां परोक्षम् । (Do. Do.)

याच्ञामोघा वरमधिगुणे नाधमे लब्धकामा ।

(Meghasandesa, I, 6)

आशाबन्धः कुसुमसदृशं प्रायशो ह्यङ्गनानाम् ।

सद्यःपाति प्रणयिहृदयं विप्रयोगे रुणद्धि ॥ (Do. I, 10)

स्त्रीणामाद्यं प्रणयवचनं विभ्रमो हि प्रियेषु ।

(Do. I, 29)

प्रायः सर्वो भवति करुणावृत्तिरार्द्रान्तरात्मा ।

(Do. II, 32)

कस्यैकान्तं सुखमुपगतं दुःखमेकान्ततो वा

नीचैर्गच्छत्युपरि च दशा चक्रनेमिक्रमेण ॥

(Do. II, 48)

स्नेहानाहुः किमपि विरहे ध्वंसिनस्ते ह्यभोगा

दिष्टे वस्तुन्युपचितरसाः प्रेमराशीभवन्ति ॥

(Do. Do. 51)

प्रत्युक्तं हि प्रणयिषु सतामीप्सितार्थक्रियैव ।

(Do. Do. 53)

एको हि दोषो गुणसंनिपाते
निमज्जतीन्दोः किरणेष्विवाङ्कः ॥
(Kumarasambhava I, 3)

क्षुद्रोऽपि नूनं शरणं प्रपन्ने ममत्वमुच्चैः शिरसां सतीव ।
(Do I, 12)

अभ्यर्थनाभङ्गभयेन साधुर्माध्यस्थ्यमिष्टेऽप्यवलम्बतेऽर्थे ॥
(Do. I, 52)

शाम्येत्प्रत्यपकारेण नोपकारेण दुर्जनः ॥ (Do. II, 40)
विषवृक्षोऽपि संवर्ध्य स्वयं छेत्तुमसांप्रतम् ॥
(Do. II, 55)

प्रयोजनापेक्षितया प्रभूणां प्रायश्चलं गौरवमाश्रितेषु ॥
(Do. III, 1)

अत्यप्रसिद्धं यशसे हि पुंसामनन्यसाधारणमेव कर्म ।
(Do. III, 19)

प्रायेण सामग्र्य विधौ गुणानां
पराङ्मुखी विश्वसृजः प्रवृत्तिः ॥ (Do. III, 28)

न हीश्वरव्याहृतयः कदाचित्पुष्णन्ति लोके विपरीतमर्थम्
(Do. III, 63)

स्वजनस्य हि दुःखमग्रतो विवृतद्वारमिवोपजायते ॥
(Do. IV, 26)

दयितास्वनवस्थितं नृणां न खलु प्रेम चलं सुहृज्जने ॥
(Do. IV, 28)

क ईप्सितार्थस्थिरनिश्चयं मनः पयश्च निम्नाभिमुखं प्रतीपयेत् ॥ (Do. V, 5)

न धर्मवृद्धेषु वयः समीक्ष्यते ॥ (Do. V, 16)

शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम् ॥ (Do. V, 33)

न रत्नमन्विष्यति मृग्यते हि तत् ॥ (Do. V, 45)

अलोकसामान्यमचिन्त्यहेतुकं
द्विषन्ति मन्दाश्चरितं महात्मनाम् । (Do. V, 75)

ममात्रभावैकरसं मनःस्थितं न कामवृत्तिर्वचनीयमीक्षते ।
(Do. V, 82)

न केवलं यो महतोऽपभाषते शृणोति तस्मादपि यः स पापभाक् । (Do. V, 83)

क्लेशः फलेन हि पुनर्नवतां विधत्ते ॥ (Do. V, 86)

स्त्रीपुमानित्यनास्थैषा वृत्तं हि महितं सताम् ॥
(Do. VI, 12)

क्रियाणां खलु धर्म्याणां सत्पत्न्यो मूलकारणम् ॥
(Do. VI, 13)

अशोच्या हि पितुः कन्या सद्भर्तृप्रतिपादिता ।
(Do. VI, 79)

स्त्रीणां प्रियालोकफलो हि वेषः ॥ (Do. VII, 22)

विक्रिया न खलु कालदोषजा निर्मलप्रकृतिषु स्थिरोदया ।
(Do. VIII, 65)

स्तोत्र कस्य न तुष्टये । (Do. X, 9)

कार्येष्ववश्यकार्येषु सिद्धये क्षिप्रकारिता । (Do. X, 25)

विपदा परिभूताः किं व्यवस्यन्ति विलम्बितुम् ॥
(Do. X, 35)

पुत्रोत्सवे माद्यति का न हर्षात् । (Do. XI, 17)

प्रजानामेव भूत्यर्थं स ताभ्यो बलिमग्रहीत् ।
सहस्रगुणमुत्स्रष्टुमादत्ते हि रसं रविः ॥
(Raghuvamsa, I, 18)

प्रजानां विनयाधानाद्रक्षणाद्भरणादपि ।
स पिता पितरस्तासां केवलं जन्महेतवः ॥ (Do. I, 24)

संततिः शुद्धवंश्या हि परत्रेह च शर्मणे । (Do. I, 69)

प्रतिबध्नाति हि श्रेयः पूज्यपूजाव्यतिक्रमः ॥ (Do. I, 76)

एकान्तविध्वंसिषु मद्विधानां पिण्डेष्वनास्था खलु भौतिकेषु ॥
(Do. II, 57)

क्रियावस्तूपहिता प्रसीदति ॥ (Do. III. 29)

परं सर्वत्र गुणैर्निधीयते ॥ (Do. III, 62)

सर्वोपकारक्षममाश्रमं ते । (Do. V, 10)

नक्षत्रताराग्रहसंकुलापि ज्योतिष्मती चन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः ।
(Do. VI, 22)

निसर्गभिन्नास्पदमेकसंस्थं यस्मिन्द्वयं श्रीश्च सरस्वती च ॥
(Do. VI, 29)

भिन्नरुचिर्हि लोकः । (Do. VI, 30)

विषमप्यमृतं कचिद्भवेदमृतं वा विषमीश्वरेच्छया ॥
(Do. VIII, 46)

मरणं प्रकृतिः शरीरिणां विकृतिर्जीवितमुच्यते बुधैः ।
क्षणमप्यवतिष्ठते श्वसन्यदि जन्तुर्ननु लाभवानसौ ।
(Do. VIII, 87)

अवगच्छति मूढचेतनः प्रियनाशं हृदि शल्यमर्पितम् ।
स्थिरधीस्तु तदेव मन्यते कुशलद्वारतया समुद्धृतम् ॥
(Do. VIII, 88)

तेजसां हि न वयः समीक्ष्यते । (Do. XI, 1)

यशोधनानां हि यशो गरीयः । (Do. XIV, 35)

Kalidasa had some pet and beloved expressions of his own. They are not only beautiful in themselves but they also won his affection and were repeated

by him in his works. The following are a few illustrations.

भिन्नरुचिर्हि लोकः । (Raghuvamsa, VI, 30)

भिन्नरुचेर्जनस्य । (Malavikagnimitra, I verse 4)

रतिविगलितबन्धे केशपाशे प्रियायाः ।
(Raghuvamsa IX, 67)

रतिविगलितबन्धे केशहस्ते सुकेश्याः ।
(Vikramorvasiya, IV, 22)

नास्त्यगतिर्मनोरथानाम् । (Vikrmorvaisya Act, II)

मनोरथानामगतिर्न विद्यते ।
(Kumarasambhava, V, 64)

शिरीषपुष्पाधिकसौकुमार्यैः ।
(Raghuvamsa, XVIII, 45)

शिरीषपुष्पाधिकसौकुमार्यौ ।
(Kumarasambhava, I, 41)

Such is the wonderful charm of Kalidasa's Sanskrit style. So far as the Prakrit used in Kalidasa's dramas is concerned, we find that he uses *Sauraseni* for the prose portions of the dialogue and *Maharashtri* for the verse portion of the dialogue.

In the Sakuntala Act V the police officers and the fishermen speak in Magadhi but the King's brother-in-law speaks in Sauraseni. It has also been observed that Sauraseni is used also in the verses in Sakuntala. Kalidasa's Prakrit style, like his Sanskrit style, is simple and terse and idiomatic and is perfectly suited and apposite to the character, and does not contain the least vestige of cumbrousness or ambitiousness or artificiality.

I have thus far dealt with the characteristics of Kalidasa's poetry from the standpoint of the principles of literary and artistic criticism current in India. I am going to discuss in later chapters in great detail such aspects as modern western criticism has made familiar to us in regard to the exposition of poetry as a criticism of life. I shall now describe here only a few general aspects which are worthy of consideration in regard to Kalidasa's work as a poet.

It has been well said: "The principal characteristics of Kalidasa's drama and poetry are his naturalness and simplicity, his felicity of expression, his tenderness of feeling, the melody and dignity of his verse, his deep sympathy with nature and her loveliest scenes, his marvellous power of delineating

human character, his deep human interest, his originality of conception, his wonderful command of language, his intimate knowledge of the human heart his wide range of imagination, the beauty and appropriateness of his similes, the rosy hue of his pictures, his tender pathos and his complete fulfilment of poetic intentions". I have described and exemplified some of these already and shall describe and exemplify the others below. The aspects which I am discussing here are only those which western art-critics regard as those of supreme importance and value in regard to the masterpieces of the literary art.

Kalidasa's originality is one of his most marked characteristics. Like Shakespeare he was content to take his themes from the mines of the past. But his superb originality lay in that subtle craftsmanship which enabled him to convert the rough and dull ore into the smooth and coruscating gem of many facets and rainbow tints and scintillations. In my first volume I have shown how in each work of his he has added to the borrowed stories those incidents and characters which transform them into perfect works of art in which the demands of reason and

imagination and poetic justice are amply and adequately met. In this respect he shows matchless originality of conception and fertility of invention. *Ritusamhara* and *Meghasandesa* and *Vikramorvasiya* are absolutely original works in matter as well as in form.

An equally remarkable feature is the range of his genius. Other poets in the world have excelled in lyric poetry or in epic poetry or in dramatic poetry but none except Kalidasa has excelled so well and in so unique a degree in all of them. Shakespeare may excel him in drama; Valmiki and Vyasa may excel him in epic poetry ; and Jayadeva may excel him in the lyric. But if we take the entirety of a poet's work and have regard to the amplitude of the range of his genius, it seems to me that the palm and the crown must go to Kalidasa. Mr. R. E. Robinson says well about him : "His eye singled out like a prism all the rich glowing tints of life's colours, and his brain, receiving them, as if it had been a palette, translated them into descriptions of jewel-like beauty".

Another remarkable trait of Kalidasa is his imaginative power. His sensuousness and concretis-

ing power enabled him to see truths in a succession of images and impart them to the minds of his readers in a concrete way by a succession of glowing images. His naturalness, his simplicity, his universal appeal, his power of realising the innate affinities of things, his clearness of perception and representation, his ever-fresh ways of looking at things and delineating them, his passion for glowing colour and proportion and harmony, and his equal intimacy with and mastery of the beautiful and the sublime are all the result of the plastic force of his imagination which brought before his inner vision ever-new and ever-true pictures of the world of nature and the world of the soul.

His perfection of insight was due to the perfection of his imagination. He knew the message of nature and he was a master of the language of the human heart. He is a master of the emotion of love because he had an intuitive insight into the ever-changing moods of lovers and the mingled pain and rapture of love. In the same way he entered into the mood of pathos and other moods of the soul. The excellence of his delineation of the *Rasas* is due to this faculty of insight and intuitive vision. Though

he is thus a master of the human affections and passions, he delights most and shines best in depicting the tenderest aspects of life. Tenderness of feeling is his special glory. He describes chaste and pure and affectionate love; his pathos is soft and subdued; his pictures of the marvellous are free from violence and extravagance; and his delineation of dispassion and devotion is full of a holy calm "quiet as a nun breathless with adoration."

His imagination and insight and intuition give to his interpretation of life its unique value and glory. Life according to him is not merely the life of events and emotions in the world of man. He knew that man reaches the fulness of his stature only by love of Nature and by love of God. Social service, love of nature, and devotion to God are the tripods on which rests the self-realisation of the soul of man. Kalidasa has sung nobly about love. Mr. Ryder has said well: "No other poet in any land has sung of happy love between man and woman as Kalidasa sang". True and tender and chivalrous and romantic love, in all its joy and grief, and face to face with life in all its variety of joyous and tragic elements is described in his works. At the same time he

showed nature as responsive to the heart of human beings as well as in its own glory of scenic panorama. He knew and communed with the soul which activates nature as much and as well as the world of human life. He knew that nature-poetry becomes warm and palpitating with life when linked to human life and the life divine. Over his poetry of human life and poetry of nature is shed "the light that never was on sea or land, the consecration and the poet's dream" of the life divine which interpenetrates, in a manner unseen but intimately felt, the world of nature and the world of man, and gives both a grander interest and a more far-reaching value and glory than they would have either singly or even in mutual combination. Thus I would regard as Kalidasa's greatest trait his interpretation of the life of man and the life of nature and the life divine, though his nature poetry has its own limitations and defects.

(It must be next pointed out that Kalidasa's intellectual virility and power are equally remarkable traits.) He is often represented as a sensuous poet imagining and revelling in pictures of outward loveliness, and giving them a beautiful setting in soft and

sweet speech. But this statement errs by emphasising one aspect of his nature at the expense of the other. He saw life steadily and saw it whole and his intellect grappled and solved all the problems of life. I shall show this adequately in the later chapters of this volume. Mr. A. W. Ryder says well about him: "Poetical fluency is not rare; intellectual grasp is not very uncommon; but the combination has not been found perhaps more than a dozen times since the world began. Because he possessed this harmonious combination, Kalidasa ranks not with Anacreon and Horace and Shelley but with Sophocles, Virgil and Milton."

Next must be mentioned his power of dramatic delineation of character. He has given us a great gallery of immortal portraits which will live for ever. The greatest of all the gifts of a poet is the gift of breathing life into his creations. It is by this power that he rises to kinship with the divine creative energy in the universe. It has been well said: अपारे काव्यसंसारे कविरेव प्रजापतिः। (In the infinite cosmos of poesy, the poet is the creator). Power of narrative, power of song, emotional appeal, felicity of expression,—are great gifts but they are subordinate to the supreme

gift of creation of characters. (He has got Shakespeare's magical power of making his characters universal yet full of individuality.) About the power of characterisation of later poets in India it has been said: "All heroes are cast in the same heroic mould; all love-sick heroines suffer in silence and burn with fever; all fools are shrewd and impudent by turns; all knaves are heartless and cruel and suffer in the end; and there is not much to distinguish between one warrior and another, between one tender woman and her sister". But this cannot be said of Kalidasa. I have dealt in my earlier volume with his power of characterisation as revealed in his description and delineation of each character. Mr. Ryder says well: "I know of no poet, unless it be Shakespeare, who has given the world a group of heroines so individual, yet so universal; heroines as true, as tender, as brave as are Indumati, Sita, Parvati, Yaksha's bride, and Sakuntala. Kalidasa could not understand women without understanding children. It would be difficult to find anywhere lovelier pictures of childhood than those in which our poet presents the little Bharata, Ayus, Raghu, Kumara". Mr. Ryder is however wrong in thinking that "he never does more than glance at a little

girl". The loveliest picture of girlhood in all the world is given to us in *Kumarasambhava*.

Kalidasa's power of vivid and ornate description is another great trait of his poetry. I am discussing and illustrating later on his poetry of nature. The special feature of his power of description is its combination of concreteness and abstraction, its correlation of the parts and the whole, of express statement and suggestiveness. His eyes singled out with unerring sureness the most attractive and prominent elements of the object or the situation or the event described, and his imagination threw a robe of splendour over the nakedness of things. His artistic self-control and his delicay of taste prevented him from losing the whole in the parts or the parts in the whole. It is difficult to pause and make a selection by way of illustration when his gallery of descriptive touches is so full of finished full-length portraits. I shall however refer to a few of them which will find a place here more appropriately than in later chapters. In Raghuvamsa Canto I verses 48 to 53 he describes the hermitage of Vasishtha as it appears in the glow of the evening sun.

वनान्तरादुपावृत्तैः समित्कुशफलाहरैः ।
पूर्यमाणमदृश्याग्निप्रत्युद्यातैस्तपस्विभिः ॥

आकीर्णमृषिपत्नीनामुटजद्वाररोधिभिः ।
अपत्यैरिव नीवारभागधेयोचितैर्मृगैः ॥

सेकान्ते मुनिकन्याभिस्तत्क्षणोज्झितवृक्षकम् ।
विश्वासाय विहङ्गानामालवालाम्बुपायिनाम् ॥

आतपात्ययसंक्षिप्तनीवारासु निषादिभिः ।
मृगैर्वर्तितरोमन्थमुटजाङ्गनभूमिषु ॥

(The hermitage was getting filled with ascetics who returned from the forest with fuel and grass and fruits and who were received with the household fires. It was filled also with deer which were accustomed to be fed with grain and which pressed into the doors of the huts there like the children of the ladies of the hermitage. The maidens then had just left the hermitage trees and plants after watering them, so as to induce the confidence of the birds which would drink the water there. The place was full of the deer which sat in the corn heaps gathered up in the evening and which quietly chewed the cud in the verandahs of the huts in the

hermitage). The picture is so clearly and vividly drawn and so full of essential details which alone are given with due regard to the unity of the whole scene, that a great painter can use it to give us a magical creation in colours to match the poet's creation. An equally fine description is that of the king wandering in the forest in the course of his service of the cow. It occurs in canto II verses 9 to 14 and is another fit subject for the canvas of a great painter. I have long wondered why the Indian painters of to-day have never thought of going to the two greatest scene-painters in words—Valmiki and Kalidasa—for scenes and suggestions and inspirations. The modern South Indian schools of painting do not show beauty of idea. The modern Bengal school of painting is lacking in great themes. Both aim no doubt at Indianness of landscape and setting and scene and idea but are limp and nerveless in execution and are deficient in that combination of originality and intensiveness and extensiveness which alone, when united to great and vital æsthetic and spiritual ideas, can bring glory to the artist and gladness to the nation. In Canto II verses 9 to 14 the poet describes the trees which seemed to utter by the sounds of birds cries of "Victory to the King."

The creepers shed flowers on his head as the city maidens would scatter fried rice on the royal head in the course of his triumphal progress. The deer, assured by the love and compassion in his eyes despite the bow in his hands, gazed at him with fearless tenderness. The winds careering through the holes in the bamboos evoked sweet tones and seemed to praise his greatness. The cool and gentle and fragrant breeze soothed his limbs. The forest fires faded away and receded, and a sudden wealth of flower and fruit shone on trees, and the animal foes forgot their enmity in his presence.

One other fine picturesque verse also may be cited here.

श्रुतिसुखभ्रमरस्वनगीतयः
    कुसुमकोमलदन्तरुचो बभुः ।
उपवनान्तलताः पवनाहृतैः
    किसलयैः सलयैरिव पाणिभिः ॥ (IX, 35)

(The garden creepers sang through the sweet sounds of bees and shone with flowers as their bright teeth and rendered emotion by gesture by tender leaves as their fingers which kept time to music.)

The number of such word-painted scenes of exquisite beauty abound in Kumarasambhava. In the whole range of literature we have no pictures to rival the two companion delineations of Siva and Parvati in penance.

पर्यङ्कबन्धस्थिरपूर्वकाय-
मृज्वायतं सन्नमितोभयांसम् ।
उत्तानपाणिद्वयसंनिवेशा-
त्प्रफुल्लराजीवमिवाङ्कमध्ये ॥

भुजङ्गमोन्नद्धजटाकलापं
कर्णावसक्तद्विगुणाक्षसूत्रम् ।
कण्ठप्रभासङ्गविशेषनीलां
कृष्णत्वचं ग्रन्थिमतीं दधानम् ॥

किंचित्प्रकाशस्तिमितोग्रतारै-
र्भ्रूविक्रियायां विरतप्रसंगैः ।
नेत्रैरविस्पन्दितपक्ष्ममालै-
र्लक्ष्यीकृतघ्राणमधोमयूखैः ॥

अवृष्टिसंरम्भमिवाम्बुवाह-
मपामिवाधारमनुत्तरङ्गम् ।

अन्तश्चराणां मरुतां निरोधा-
न्निवातनिष्कम्पमिव प्रदीपम् ॥

कपालनेत्रान्तरलब्धमार्गै-
र्ज्योतिःप्ररोहैरुदितैः शिरस्तः ।
मृणालसूत्राधिकसौकुमार्यां
बालस्य लक्ष्मीं ग्लपयन्तमिन्दोः ॥

मनो नवद्वारनिषिद्धवृत्ति
हृदि व्यवस्थाप्य समाधिवश्यम् ।
यमक्षरं वेदविदो विदुस्त-
मात्मानमात्मन्यवलोकयन्तम् ॥

(III, 45 to 50)

शुचौ चतुर्णां ज्वलतां हविर्भुजां
शुचिस्मिता मध्यगता सुमध्यमा ।
विजित्य नेत्रप्रतिघातिनीं प्रभा-
मनन्यदृष्टिः सवितारमैक्षत ॥

तथाभितप्तं सवितुर्गभस्तिभि-
र्मुखं तदीयं कमलश्रियं दधौ ।
अपाङ्गयोः केवलमस्य दीर्घयोः
शनैः शनैः श्यामिकया कृतं पदम् ॥

अयाचितोपस्थितमम्बु केवलं
रसात्मकस्योडुपतेश्च रश्मयः ।
बभूव तस्याः किल पारणाविधि-
र्न वृक्षवृत्तिव्यतिरिक्तसाधनः ॥

निकामतप्ता विविधेन वह्निना
नभश्चरेणेन्धनसंभृतेन सा ।
तपात्यये वारिभिरुक्षिता नवै-
र्भुवा सहोष्माणममुञ्चदूर्ध्वगम् ॥

स्थिताः क्षणं पक्ष्मसु ताडिताधराः
पयोधरोत्सेधनिपातचूर्णिताः ।
वलीषु तस्याः स्खलिताः प्रपेदिरे
चिरेण नाभिं प्रथमोदबिन्दवः ॥

शिलाशयान्तामनिकेतवासिनीं
निरन्तरास्वन्तरवातवृष्टिषु ।
व्यलोकयन्नुन्मिषितैस्तडिन्मयै-
र्महातपः साक्ष्य इव स्थिताः क्षपाः ॥

(V, 20 to 25)

Which painter of genius is destined to paint such *Mahatapas* (great penance) on canvas for the

glory of India? The marriage of Siva and Parvati is another wonderfully pourtrayed scene in the poem. The devastated *Svarga* and the battle between Taraka and Kumara are equally vividly described. In Meghasandesa each verse is a finished picture and if we could have a Meghasandesa gallery that would by itself be a national treasure-house of art. Equally beautiful are the description of the dance and the *dohada* and the other scenes in *Malavikagnimitra*. The aerial carflights and the coming of Chitralekha and Urvasi and the wandering of the disconsolate King in Vikramorvasiya are equally fine. But perhaps the poet's pictorial power reaches its culmination in Sakuntala. The descriptions of the bee and Sakuntala, of Sakuntala watering the trees, of Sakuntala and her friends, of Sakuntala writing her love-letter, of Sakuntala in the king's audience-hall, of Sakuntala taken to heaven, of the king's remorse, and of the reunion in Hemakuta are absolutely flawless and perfect.

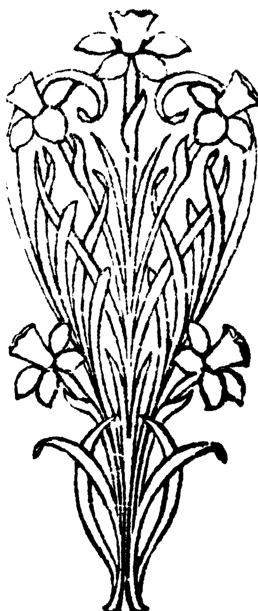
(Equally wonderful is the poet's knowledge of the human heart) He is a master of all the secret thoughts and ideals and delights and dreads and agonies of the heart. He has sounded the entire

gamut of human passions and affections and emotions. I am dealing with the poet's ideals of beauty and of love and of life later on and shall show in those chapters many aspects of his perfect knowledge of the heart. I shall mention here only a few instances to show that he knew the whole range of the joys and griefs and the graces and the sanctities and the profundities of life. In Raghuvamsa, VIII, 87 he says that death is the rule and life is the exception and that we must render thanks for every breath of life. He says and shows again and again that the real value and joy and glory of life consists in love and service and renunciation. All the wonderful variety of sentiment and situation which glitters in his pages enforces that one and supreme lesson. The love of man for woman and of woman for man is perfectly described in his poems. Equally well are the love of sons described in Sakuntala and Vikramorvasiya and the love of daughters in Kumarasambhava and Sakuntala. The service of teachers and holy men in a spirit of affectionate reverence abounds in his works. The importance of social unity and love and the abiding mutual affection of king and people is stressed in work after work by him. The poet is not content with purifying the soul by love and

service and renunciation in the concerns of earthly life but takes it again and again in moods of love and renunciation and service and devotion and adoration to the lotus feet of God.

Last, but not least, should be mentioned Kalidasa's golden beauty and felicity and melody of style. Mr. A. W. Ryder says well : "The total effect left by his poetry is one of extraordinary sureness and delicacy of taste." It is true that mere magic of style cannot lead to immortality. Beauty of thought, refinement of feeling, and vivid force of imagination are the primary passports to poetic glory. But these by themselves will not give the poet a universal entrance into the human heart. It is the perfection of manner—which combines melody of language, aptness and felicity of phrase, power of word-painting and never-failing grace—which is the chief passport to an eternity of fame. In him we find perfection of sound as well as perfection of sense. Style and sentiment are fused in his works into something greater than either or both. Kalidasa's manner is worthy of his matter and his matter is worthy of his manner. To use the words of Mathew Arnold he has both profundity of thought and

natural magic of style. It is the perfect union of manner and matter which is Kalidasa's greatest charm and the surest guarantee of his immortality and which can be best described only in his own immortal words as being a unity in duality and a duality in unity—the union of Vak and Artha, of Parvati and Parameswara.





CHAPTER III.

Kalidasa as a Dramatist.

I have described in the previous chapter Kalidasa's special merits and excellences as a poet. Those characteristics are found in his plays as much as in his poems, and all that was stated by me in regard to his poetry apply to his dramas also. Indeed the poetic element in his plays constitutes one of the chief elements of their charm. They contain some of the most beautiful and memorable of his verses. These stanzas besides being most appropriate in their setting have an independent value of their own. Kalidasa always avoided mere purple patches and was fastidiously economical in the use of words and avoided descriptive diffuseness. The verses in the plays grow out of the situations therein. But they show all the characteristic excellences of his art and contain his ripest and mellowest wisdom.

Kalidasa has been often called as the Shakespeare of India. At the same time no less a person than Mr. T. Gopala Row is said to have stated: "Out of a part of Shakespeare's brain, you can create a Kalidasa". With all respect to him I must say that he was wrong in his view. Shakespeare had certainly a wider range, and a greater variety of dramatic achievement than Kalidasa He had a tragic intensity and a vivid power of dramatic presentation of history which Kalidasa could never be credited with. But there are directions in which Kalidasa has achieved more than Shakespeare. His delineation of nature and of the intermingling of the life of nature and the life of man is more natural and beautiful than the achievement of Shakespeare. His grip over the spiritual elements of life is more assured and convincing. Further, in Sakuntala he has given to us an idealised and yet individualised heroine who is on a throne apart.

I do not think that it will be fitting that I should enter into a discussion here about dramatic ideals in general or about the ideals of Indian drama or about Indian dramaturgy or about the rise and growth of the Indian drama. I have done this work

in my book an *Indian Æsthetics* and elsewhere. I shall hence make here only a very cursory reference to those topics only to the extent to which they will illustrate Kalidasa's excellence as a dramatist, because my aim in this work is to confine it to an exposition of Kalidasa.

The dramatic art has been practised in India from the most ancient times. Bharata's Natya Sastra is of very great antiquity. Indian drama was of indigenous origin and was not a literary form borrowed from Greece. The word *Yavanika* has been shown to throw no light whatever on the alleged Greek origin of the Indian theatre. The prologues in Indian plays show that they were closely connected with our spring festivals and religious festivals. Thus the Indian drama was a product of the Indian genius. Mr. Mac Donnell says in his *Sanskrit Literature* : "The improbability of the theory is emphasised by the still greater affinity of the Indian drama to that of Shakespeare.........The Indian drama has had a thoroughly national development, and even its origin, though obscure, easily admits of an indigenous explanation." The structure of the Indian plays has little in common with the structure of Greek plays.

The rigid distinction of tragedy and comedy is not observed in Indian drama. The rigid attention of the Greek drama to the three unities of time and place and action has no counterpart in Indian plays, though the Indian dramatists certainly observed unity of action. In all these respects the Indian drama differs from the classical drama and resembles the modern romantic drama. In one respect the Indian Drama is unique. It never bowed its head to the doctrines of Fate and Nemesis as Greek drama did. The doctrines of Karma and of Grace give to Indian drama its peculiar flexibility and scientific concatenation of cause and effect, and its gentleness and its sweetness. The Indian drama is as surely an efflorescence of the Indian ideals of life as the Greek drama is the outcome of the Greek ideals of life.

In regard to the alleged Greek origin of the Indian drama, we have also to bear in mind the very important chronological fact that the earliest Indian dramas belong to the 6th century B. C. whereas there are no historical data showing that there were any cultural relations between the Greeks and the Hindus prior to Alexander's invasion of India. Though Professor Weber puts forward the

theory that the Sanskrit drama had its beginnings "in the influence the Greeks wielded on the Hindus," he admits that "no internal connection, however, with the Greek drama exists."

Thus Indian drama is a home-grown art. It probably began as musical recitation and gesticulation and dancing on occasions of religious festivals and grew into a literary form after the introduction of the dramatic dialogue and the representation of life in action. Indian tradition has given Art, and especially Drama, an exalted place—that of an Upaveda under the name of *Gandharva Veda*. Bharata's great work on *Natya Sastra* is a mine of ideas on æsthetics and poetics and dramaturgy and has not been surpassed even to this day. The Vedas and the epics contain valuable dramatic materials and situations which will be valuable for all time and can be worked into ever-new forms of loveliness from age to age. The Ramayana refers to Natas and Nartakas and Natakas (Ayodhya Kanda, 67, 15 and 69, 3). The word *Vyamisraka* in the Ayodhya Kanda, I, 27 refers to dramas in mixed languages. The recitations and expositions of the Puranas and the Itihasas formed a source of the

drama as a literary form. Mr. A. B. Keith has in his excellent volume *The Sanskrit Drama* suggested that "the term Bharata, which is an appellation of the comedian in the later texts, attests doubtless the connection of the rhapsodes with the growth of the drama." He suggests also that "the term Kusilava, which occasionally denotes actor, is apparently derived from the Kusa and Lava of the Ramayana."

We find mention made in Panini about the Natasutras of Cailalin and Krisaswa. Modern scholarship assigns the sixth or the fourth century B. C. to him. Patanjali, who is assigned to the second century B. C. clearly refers to dramatic compositions dealing with the stories relating to the subjugation of Bali and the slaying of Kamsa. Mr. Keith says: "We seem in fact to have in the Mahabhashya evidence of a stage in which all the elements of drama were present; we have acting, in dumb show, if not with words also; we have recitations divided between two parties. Moreover, we hear of Natas who not only recite but also sing". The *Harivamsa* expressly refers to dramatic performances. Thus from the earliest times the connection between Indian religion and Indian drama

was intimate and vital. The Buddhistic sacred books also refer to Buddha's disciples having witnessed certain dramatic representations.

Mr. Keith has elaborately shown the untenability of the theory that the drama arose out of popular mimes and was secular in its origin and that the Prakrit drama preceded Sanskrit drama. The Prakrit poems and dramas were undoubtedly later arrivals and developments. The Kavyas and the Natakas arose out of the epics and had religious origin and religious associations, and their final and ultimate source was in the *Vedas*. Among the earliest dramatic works extant is the famous play Mricchakatika. The dramas of *Bhasa* have been published but a controversy is raging yet about their genuineness. Kalidasa's works are later than Bhasa's works and form the culmination of the classical Indian drama, Mr. A. B. Keith says well : "He is simple, as are Bhasa and the author of *Mricchakatika*, but with an elegance and refinement which are not found in those two writers".

There are some special features about Indian dramas which are worth noticing and recording here. On the one hand it is true that the Indian

dramatist was more constrained by Indian æsthetical rules relating to the dramatic art than his compeer in the west. But the rules about Nayakas and Nayikas and Bhavas and Rasas and the directions about dramatic construction steadied the second-rate dramatic poets without hampering dramatic genius too much. Further, the rule that the *parakiya* or the wife of another person should not be made the subject of a dramatic intrigue and the rule that amorous exhibitions and indecencies should not be indulged in on the stage introduced an element of purity and delicacy into the dramatic art. H. H. Wilson says about this prohibition that "it would have sadly cooled the imagination and curbed the wit of Dryden and Congreve." Wilson says further: "The loose gallantry of modern comedy is unknown to the Hindus, and they are equally strangers to the professed adoration of chivalric poetry; but their passion is neither tame nor undignified. It is sufficiently impassioned not to degrade the object of the passion; while at the same time the place that woman holds in society is too rationally defined for her to assume an influence foreign to her nature, and the estimation in which human life is held is too humble for a writer to elevate any mortal to the

honours of divinity...The love of the Hindus is less sensual than that of the Greek or Latin comedy and less metaphysical than that of French or English tragedy." Mr. A. W. Ryder says: "Indeed nothing regarded as disagreeable, such as fighting or even kissing, is permitted on the stage; here Europe may perhaps learn a lesson in taste."

I shall now describe briefly the framework of the Indian dramas. The principles of dramatic composition are elaborately discussed in Dasarupaka, Sahityadarpana, Prataparudriya and other works on Indian Æsthetics. The all-important elements of a play are *Vastu* or the plot, *neta* or the hero, and *rasa* or the sentiment. (The prologue consists of the *Purvaranga* or the introductory portion which includes Nandi or the opening benedictory stanza and an account of the author and a reference to the work and an appeal to the favour of the audience. The conclusion of such *Prastavana* (or prelude) prepares the audience by means of some reference to the manager for the entrance of one of the characters in the play. The story of the drama consists of five elements: the *Bija* or the circumstances and incidents out of which the action

pourtrayed takes its origin; the *bindu* or the development of secondary incidents which give a clue to the event of the play ; *pataka*, which means an episode ; *prakari*, which means an episodical incident in which the principal characters do not bear a part, and *karya i.e.*, the object or the end. The drama is developed and constructed by means of Scenes and Acts. The five stages of a play are *Arambha* (beginning), *Yatna* (effort), *Praptyasa* (desire of success), *niyatapti* (certainty of attainment by removal of obstacles) and *phalagama* (attainment of the desired object). The combinations of the incidents are the *sandhis*. They are five *i.e. Mukha* or opening ; *pratimukha i.e.* secondary event calculated to promote or obstruct the *denouement* ; the *garbha* or the covert prosecution of one's purpose apparently giving way to impediments but in reality realising the original idea ; *Vimarsa* in which an effect is produced contrary to the cause or an expectation baffled ; and *upasamhara* or *nirvahana i.e*, the denouement. Such parts of the story as need not be actually represented on the stage are narrated by means of interludes which are called *Vishkambhaka* and *pravesaka*. A *Vishkambhaka* shows the connection between the past events and the

future events in the play by means of a dialogue between the minor characters. A *Pravesaka* comes between two Acts and indicates the future event through the conversation of inferior characters in *Prakrit*. A *Pravesaka* can never open the first Act. The play must close as it began *i.e.* with a benediction or a prayer, called *Bharatavakya*, by one of the chief characters in the play. The ramifications of the rules of dramaturgy are many and complicated but the above is a bare and brief outline of a Sankrit drama.

Thus the Indian critics and æstheticians knew well that while a poem appeals to the ear alone the drama appeals to the eye also and has a powerful purifying and uplifting and educative value. The ordinary term for a drama is *Rupaka* which implies primarily the object of vision and secondarily the diversity of the impersonations. The drama (*natya*) is distinguished from the dance (*nritta*) and the mimetic art (nritya). It is the addition of speech and song that rounds off *nritya* into *natya*. *Nritta* is based on time and rhythm ; *Nritya* is based on the expression of *bhava* or emotion ; and *natya* is based on *rasa* or the prevailing æsthetical mood.

The plot may be taken from Puranic tradition (prakhyata), or invented (*utpadya*) or a combination of both (*misra*). The works on dramaturgy lay down various rules about the hero and the heroine in plays. The drama should evoke a *rasa i.e. sthayibhava* (a dominant and pervasive æsthetic mood) by the union of *vibhava* (determinant elements of feeling), *anubhavas* (consequent elements of feeling) and *vyabhicharibhavas* (transitory elements of feeling). The dramatist must aim not only at perfection of plot and characterisation and sentiment but must aim also at appropriateness and perfection of style. In respect of the stage much attention was bestowed on *abhinaya* or the art of representation of emotion by gesture aided by voice. Thus the technique of the drama attained a high state of perfection in India.

Mr. A. B. Keith says: "This art was essentially aristocratic ; the drama was never popular in the sense in which tha Greek drama possessed that quality." This is not a correct estimate at all. Indian drama aimed at appealing and did powerfully appeal to the popular mind. It was a natural development, even according to Mr. Keith, of that powerfully democratic art *i.e.* the art of Puranic

recitation and exposition. Mr. Keith says further : "The drama bears, therefore, essential traces of its connexion with the Brahmins. They were idealist in outlook, capable of large generalizations, but regardless of accuracy in detail, and to create a realistic drama was wholly incompatible with their temperament. The accurate delineation of facts was to them nothing ; they aimed at the creation in the mind of the audience of sentiment, and what was necessary for this end was all that was attempted." This again is a remark which errs by a love of antithetical overstatement, a desire to beat the Indians with the transcendental stick and advise them to be good boys lest the god of the ferule should whack them well. The Indian mind is a harmonisation of realism and idealism. The dramas of social realism are a creature of yesterday in the west and were unknown to Greece and Rome. Mr. Keith says further : "It follows from this principle that the plot is a secondary element in the drama in its highest form, the heroic play or *Nataka*. To complicate it would divert the mind from emotion to intellectual interest, and affect injuriously the production of sentiment." This again is an unjust remark. It was a wise rule to keep one high and exalted

form of dramatic composition (the *Nataka*) from intrusive and ugly realism and overweighted intellectualism. But plays with original plots and dramas aiming at social castigation were allowed and were written and staged. In the *Natika*, *Prakarana*, and *Prahasana* every variety of realism can be represented. Mr. Keith is further wrong in thinking that there is some inherent incompatibility between the emotional interest and the intellectual interest. The dramatist was wisely asked to look more to the former than to the latter. The overweighted intellectualism of the plays of Shaw and others is not the last word in dramatic perfection.

Mr. Keith has no doubt rightly criticised the Indian theatre for the absence of tragedy therein. Bhasa's *Urubhanga* is a tragical play despite Keith's critical opinion about it. But the tragedy as a great literary form did not arise in India. But surely Mr. Keith is going too far when he says: "The emotions which thus it was desired to evoke were, however, strictly limited by the Brahminical theory of life. The actions and status of man in any existence depend on no accident; they are essentially the working out of deeds done in a previous birth,

and these again are explained by yet earlier actions from time without beginning. Indian drama is thus deprived of a motif which is invaluable to Greek tragedy, and everywhere provides a deep and profound tragic element, the intervention of forces beyond control or calculation in the affairs of man, confronting his mind with distach es upon which the greatest intellect and the most determined will are shattered." Mr. Keith, like other Western exponents of Indian culture, is unable to understand the heart of the Indian doctrine of Karma. It is the wise golden mean between freak and fate. It could be the source of true tragic feeling in a play if the overwhelming force of events or the dismal failure of will is shown as the result of the operation of the nexus of cause and effect. Take for instance the death of Abhimanyu or of Ghatotkaja or Karna. There is nothing in the Indian aesthetic or religious doctrines which prevents a playwright from dramatising such excellent tragic material. The Indian mind did not accept the Greek theory of a blind fate or nemesis. All honour to it on that account! The modern mind does not accept the theory of a blind Fate and is not tragically deficient on that account. On the other hand the absence of the

doctrines of Karma and of a God of Beneficence in Greek tragedy or in modern realism has emptied them of the highest purgation of pity and true tragical and spiritual feeling.

Mr. Keith says with a veiled sneer "that the sentiments which are to be evoked by a Sanskrit Nataka are essentially the heroic or the erotic, with that of wonder as a valuable subordinate element, appropriate in the *denoument*". In fact the sentiment of heroism was expanded so as to include a *dana vira* (heroism of munificence e. g. Karna), and a *daya vira* (heroism of compassion e g. in *Nagananda*). There is nothing to prevent its further expansion into heroism of patriotism and other aspects of the heroic spirit. Indian Æsthetics rightly stressed the dominant and permanent æsthetic moods but did not prevent new applications and expansions of dramatic sentiment and emotion. As for the wonderful, it has a limited place in Greek drama and no place at all in modern drama. The more their loss and our gain! Life is a mystery and a wonder and a glory, and not mere eating and sleeping and love-making and fighting and dying. Art should make us realise this fundamental fact,

and all honour to Indian Art that it has kept God's banner flying when Art elsewhere did not know God well or sought to deny or forget Him.

Mr. Keith is further in error in criticising the Indian dramatist's refusal to permit of a division of sentiment. He says: "Idealist as it is, the spirit of the drama declines to permit of a division of sentiment; it will not allow the enemy of the hero to rival him in any degree; nothing is more striking than the failure to realise the possibility of a great dramatic creation presented by the character of Ravana as the rival of Rama for Sita's love." I am afraid that this remark is unfortunate for more reasons than one. The best Indian dramatist represent Ravana's character with insight and power. They do not describe him as a merely "boastful and rather stupid Villain." They could not make him as interesting as Rama, consistently with æsthetic or ethical propriety. Even Milton has been criticised for making Satan more interesting than God and for unconsciously exalting him to the level of the true hero of *Paradise Lost*. To treat Rama and Ravana as rivals for Sita's love, and regard them as resembling Menelaus and Paris, is the height of absurdity.

Mr. Keith proceeds then to generalise in a peculiar fashion of his own. He says: "How serious a limitation in dramatic outlook is produced by the Brahminical theory of life, the whole history of Sanskrit drama shows. Moreover, acceptance of the Brahmanic tradition permits the production of such a play as the *Chandakausika*, where reason and humanity are revolted beyond measure by the insane vengeance taken by the sage Visvamitra on the unfortunate king for an act of charity." It is not reasonable to father the literary excesses of an author upon an entire community. The Brahmanical theory of life indeed ! Why should it not be called the Hindu theory of life ? The entire attitude of the Hindu people towards life is naturally reflected in their drama. Their attitude is at least as noble and as worthy and as rational as the attitude of any other race towards life. Mr. Keith proceeds further with his tirade and says : "To the Brahmin ideal individuality has no appeal ; the law of life has no room for deviation from type ; the caste system is rigid, and for each rank in life there is a definite round of duties, whence departure is undesirable and dangerous. "The drama likewise has no desire for individual figures, but only for typical characters."

This view is as untrue as regards the Indian drama as it is as regards the Indian outlook on life. The Indian temperament harmonises the individual and the universal. It is not a slave of any type and is not rigid at all. The caste system is a nexus of duties which certainly involve rights, but the aspect of duty is rightly emphasised. The Indian drama has been praised by other competent critics for its fine presentation of character in all its variety of individuality. Mr. Keith's view that it contains only typical (he evidently means by this wooden and colourless) characters is a mere travesty of the truth.

Mr. Keith is not content with such biting criticism. He is eagar to probe deeper. He says ; "The world which produced the classical drama was one in which the pessimism of Buddhism, with its condemnation of the value of pleasure, had given way to the worship of the great sectarian divinities Siva and Vishnu, in whose service the enjoyment of pleasure was legitimate and proper." This again is a half-truth which is worse than an untruth. The Hindu mind in its best moods and moments knew the value of pure pleasure though it always sought to rise above the mutually chasing

and clashing pain and pleasure into the uncloying glory of spiritual bliss. Buddhism was but a temporary springing away into pessimism and agnosticism. The national mind came back to the ancient and eternal ideals again. The drama furnished innocent and noble pleasure and hence appealed to the Indian mind which had returned to its ancient love. Mr. Keith brings in Vatsyayana's *Kama Sastra* and suggests that the ideal which gained sway was one of pleasure and libertinism. He says about the man about town (*nagaraka*) as sketched in Vatsyayana's work : "The luxury of polygamy did not suffice such a man ; he is allowed to enjoy the society of courtesans, and in them, as in Athens, he finds the intellectual interests which are denied to his legitimate wives." This again is a mordant untruth. He says further : "The ideal of a romantic love between two persons free and independent, masters of their own destinies, is in great measure denied to them, and they are reduced to the banality of the intrigue between the king and the damsel who is destined to be his wife, but who by some accident has been introduced into his harem in a humble position." The creators of the noble and romantic figures of Urvasi and Sakun-

tala and Sita certainly deserve a better treatment than this. The Western drama which includes the works of Plautus and Terence and the comic dramatists of the Restoration and the modern playwrights devoted to the delineation of morbid and unlawful love is nowhere near the purity and the nobility of the Indian plays. Even Vasantasena is better than Mrs. Warren. The Indian drama has no reason to hide its head in shame before the literatures of the rest of the world.

Mr. Keith is wrong in proceeding further with his castigation of the Indian drama and saying : "For the deeper questions of human life Kalidasa has no message for us; they raised, so far as we can see, no question in his own mind ; the whole Brahminical system, as restored to glory under the Guptas, seems to have satisfied him, and to have left him at peace with the universe. Fascinating and exquisite as is the *Sakuntala*, it moves in a narrow world, removed far from the cruelty of real life, and it neither seeks to answer, nor does it solve, the riddles of life". This is clever but unjust and inaccurate. I am aware of the limitations of Kalidasa and am referring to them in a later chapter. But what is

the wisdom of seeking for a thing which is not aimed at all in the play? We may as well abuse Shakespeare for not making tragic the great romantic play *viz.* the Tempest—which, as Sakuntala was in the case of Kalidasa, was the crown and consummation of his genius at its most of attained and realised peace and harmony and idealism of attitude to the universe.

It has been well said that a play must have a soul of its own and that it must work from within outwards. The great defect of most plays in the East and in the West is that they have no unifying and controlling inner idea and are merely patched-up scenes containing imaginary conversations. The plays of to-day are, further, overweighted with social purpose and make a fetish of social revolt. In the case of most plays it is the players who carry the play with them and it is not the play which carries the players with it. In some plays the controlling force is neither the play nor the players but the scenic artist. Sometimes it is the tailor or the greenroom artist—that glittering king of paints and powders—who leads all the rest. In low-level Indian plays all these have to yield the

palm to the omnipresent buffoon. All these defects are absent in Kalidasa's plays. His dramas have an inner controlling idea and carry the actors with them. In them plot and incident and dialogue and characterisation and poetry and spiritual purposiveness are in harmonious combination. They inspire the actors and the audience alike. In them all the elements of dramatic effect are in evidence and act under the sovereignty of the soul of the play.

Kalidasa's great excellence as a dramatist consists in his faithfulness to the strict rules of Indian dramaturgy and his concurrent power to delineate human passion in manifold action. I have already stated how his modesty and nobility of nature shine well in the prologues to his three extant plays. But the more important element in Kalidasa's drama is not his conformity to the rules of Æsthetics but his power of poetry, his power of incident, his power of dialogue, and his power of characterisation. I have already referred to the wonderful wisdom and beauty of thought contained in the verses scattered throughout his plays. They grow in a natural way out of the play like roses on a rose-plant ; and they are appropriate and

memorable. Mr. A. B. Keith says well : "Skilled as he is in description and ready as he is to exhibit his power, he refrains from inserting any of those ornamental stanzas which add nothing to the action, however much honour they may do to the skill of the poet." Like Shakespeare, Kalidasa was content to take his plots from the older sources. In Malavikagnimitra alone he went to contemporary life as the source of the story. But like Shakespeare he so enriched and even transformed his borrowed materials that in his hands they become a new creation altogether. I have shown in my earlier volume how by subtle yet natural devices and by the introduction of supplementary minor characters and incidents he gives us a new creation by the magic of his genius. His dialogues are equally wonderful. His unerring artistic instinct induced him to economise words and to suit them to the character and the situation. He knew that brevity is the soul of wit and that artistic effect depends on concentration. But his chief excellence lies in his power of characterisation—a quality in which he excels even the immortal Shakespeare, though he has not got as wide a range as Shakespeare in the creation of characters. Sir Monier Williams

rightly refers to "his profound knowledge of the human heart, his appreciation of its most refined and tender emotions, his familiarity with the workings and counter-workings of its conflicting feelings." I have already while discussing his dramas separately tried to assess his power of characterisation as revealed in each of his plays. But in the entire heaven of his dramatic creation the presiding deity is certainly Sakuntala.

The most permanently valuable traits of his dramatic work are his presentation of the eternal and immortal social and spiritual ideals of India, his delineation of the intermingling of the life of nature and the life of man, and his pourtrayal of the most fundamental and deep-rooted and eternal elements of human nature and aspects of human life and passion. He had a vivid sense of God's immanence and transcendence and of God as Law and Love. He revered the Vedas as the treasury of the God-revealed truths of the super-life. His was a pure and devout nature and he kindles in us an equal purity and devotion. His pourtrayal of the Indian ideal of *Tapasya* is of the greatest value to India as well as to the world at large. At the

same time he showed how the worldly life, if lived under the impulse of duty, is itself an austere and consecrated life of penance. His religion is so spiritual and so synthetic that it alone can heal the religious scars of India and smooth her schisms. Further, the Indian temperament has always delighted in seeking solace and tranquillity and ennoblement from the life of Nature. No dramatist has kindled and stimulated this delight so well as Kalidasa. Further, he enters the universal heart by the two gates of sincerity and sympathy, and his delineation of the eternal longings and passions of the human heart is so true and vivid and complete, that his creations will live for ever and appeal to all hearts in all times and climes.

I have already compared Kalidasa with Shakespeare. In a later chapter I shall compare him with the great modern Indian poet and playwright Rabindranath Tagore. I may here usefully compare him with his next great successor Bhavabhuti. Both are great masters of style and great interpreters of the human heart. But Kalidasa is supreme in the delineation of the emotion of love just as Bhavabhuti is supreme in the depicting of the emotion

of pity and tenderness. Kalidasa has more fancy and imagination than the later poet and his style has greater simplicity and brevity and charm. Kalidasa is more *suggestive* ; Bhavabhuti is more *expressive*. Both are great masters but Kalidasa is undoubtedly the greater poet and dramatist.

I only wish to add a word of tribute to Kalidasa's architectonic skill. His knowledge of stage technique is as remarkable as his dramatic skill in construction of plot, and delineation of character, and beauty and appropriateness of style. He has a vision of the close of the play before he opens it. Throughout the play we have subtle touches indicative of and leading up to what is to come later on. Even at the very commencement of Sakuntala the hunting scene suggests the pursuit of pleasure to the point of hurting innocence. There is also a hint of coming trouble in the words : दैवमस्याः प्रतिकूलं शमयितुं सोमतीर्थं गतः (Kanva has gone to Somtirtha to propitiate the gods who are adverse to Sakuntala). I have already referred to the significance of the early benediction pronounced on Dushyanta in Act I verse 11 that a *Chakravarti* should be born to him. I have referred also to the subtle way in

which Indian ideas of omens are introduced to indicate coming events. In Sakuntala, IV, 2, there is a reference to the agony caused by separation from the beloved. In Sakuntla V, 1 there is a subtle reference to the bee forgetting its beloved mango blossom. In all the three plays we find remarkable instances of his subtle and wonderful and infinite power of artistic suggestiveness and arthitectonic genius.

Thus Kalidasa, while his range as a dramatic artist is limited, has given us some of the most wonderful creations in the heaven opened to the world by the hand of poesy. He has had and has deserved the convergent homage of all countries and all generations. In his own immortal words, the diversely sweet spectacle of life is seen in his plays and they universally charm the manifold tastes of all human beings.

त्रैगुण्योद्भवमत्र लोकचरितं नानारसं दृश्यते
नाट्यं भिन्नरुचेर्जनस्य बहुधाप्येकं समाराधनम् ॥





CHAPTER IV.

Kalidasa's Limitations.

I have thus far dealt with the various aspects of Kalidasa's greatness as a poet and as a dramatist and as an interpreter of India and a revealer of universal truths. I must now proceed to point out in what respects his art is open to criticism and what are its deficiences and limitations.

In Kalidasa we cannot expect to meet and do not meet the early freshness and the natural sweetness of Valmiki's work or the moral grandeur and epic sublimity and the supreme moral and spiritual value of Vyasa's equally famous epic poem. I shall discuss the respective merits of Valmiki and Kalidasa later. In Vyasa we have an all-comprehensive mind, a universal genius, who was equally at home in the real and the ideal, in the family and the state, in politics and religion. His realisation of the

supremacy of the moral law is perhaps the noblest ever known. At the same time his realisation of the truths of the spirit has had no parallel. His canvas is the most crowded but yet the most individualised and alive in the world. Though he is not equal to Valmiki in presenting finished portraits and in general poetic charm and though Kalidasa excels him in pictorial fancy and in the graces of poetic figures of speech and in the beauties of versification, yet he excels them in his massive strength, his social and spiritual ideals, and his ethical and spiritual vision.

But Kalidasa belonged to a more sophisticated age. Between the time of the great earlier poets and his time, Buddhism had come and gone. Great and unifying empires had risen and fallen. In the realms of learning India was codifying her achievements and summing up her realisations in the realms of the ideal and the real. Luxury had increased. Great cities were growing up. The fine arts and the industrial arts were more consciously and successfully pursued. Life had become more complex and complicated and conventionalised and sophisticated but at the same time it became more graceful and

gracious and decorative, and devoted to, and successful in, the attainment of pleasure.

That is why, despite Kalidasa's greatness and originality and innate power, there is an element of conventionality about his ideas and expressions. The grace of his work is undeniable and wonderful. But he lacks freshness and freedom and force. In the hands of a lesser poet and in a pettier age this quality would have easily degenerated into mere prettiness—a riot of quaint conceits dressed in the gold brocade of trope-tinted speech. But we must remember that he belonged to a great epoch of national political liberation preceded by a great period of spiritual reform and purification. Great kings had ruled the country and given it a new unity and a new grandeur and a new self-awareness. The great Sri Sankaracharya succeeded Kalidasa and freed the Indian mind from the double incubus of agnosticism and superstition, and there was a free circulation of the rich arterial blood of an ethical and philosophic and practical religion coursing and pulsing through the life of the nation.

Thus the above defect of Kalidasa's art was due to the age. There were some defects which

were due to his special and peculiar artistic temperament and endowment. Great, nay supreme, as he was in many respects, he had a limited range. I have already shown how his range is limited in comparison with the range of Shakespeare. He never created any tragedies. But this was due as much to the genius of the race and to the rules of æsthetics as to his own outlook on life and his innate temperament. The racial genius is in the direction of equilibrium, balance, and tranquillity whereas tragedy implies loss of equilibrium, an unbalanced mental state, and violent emotion. The æsthetical rules also did not favour the composition of tragedies. It has been said well about Sanskrit dramas: "They are mixed compositions, in which joy and sorrow, happiness and misery, are woven in a mingled web:—tragi-comic representations in which good and evil, right and wrong, truth and falsehood are allowed to blend in confusion during the first acts of the drama. But in the last Act, harmony is always restored, order succeeds to disorder, tranquillity to agitation, and the mind of the spectator, no longer perplexed by the apparent ascendancy of the evil, is soothed and purified, and made to acquiesce in the moral lesson deducible from the

plot." It is to be noted that though Kalidasa's dramatic range is less than that of Shakespeare, he has achieved notable things in epic and lyric poetry and is thus above Shakespeare's level in respect of his artistic range as a whole.

But even taking the entirety of his achievement into consideration, his range is limited in various ways. His humour is limited in its range and brilliance. He did not give great historical plays, as Shakespeare did, which could kindle into a bright fire the patriotic feeling in our hearts. The more stormy and violent emotions of life are unrepresented in his works. Everything is smoothed and softened and presented in a calm and gentle and unperturbed manner. He has not tried to pourtray the stern and tragic scenes and aspects of life. He did not try to transfer to his canvas all the immense variety —puzzlingly variegated as it is—of the social life of India. He never tried to enter into the life of the peoples outside India and present their inner life in his plays and poems. In this direction Shakespeare's catholicity and variety of achievement form noteworthy features of his unique genius.

Mr. Keith refers in his *Sanskrit drama* to

"the narrow range imposed on Kalidasa's interests by his unfeigned devotion to the Brahmanical creed of his time." I have already adverted to his mental spproach towards Kalidasa's dramas from this wrong angle of vision. Kalidasa was, and could not but be, an incarnation of the genius of his race. He would be uninteresting and would have no message to his own or other times or to his own people or other races, were it otherwise. The Hindu view of life was and is one of remarkable balance and harmony and co-ordination of the real and the ideal, and is evident in its perfection in Kalidasa. This is a merit and not a defect or limitation at all.

One noticeable defect is Kalidasa's treatment of Godhead. Beautiful and true as it is, he has humanised the divine too much. Poetry no doubt is the realm of the concrete, but the life divine should not be concretised too much if it is to be a means of our spiritual uplift. In Kumarasambhava, VII, 77, he even describes Parvati as having perspiration owing to the blissful tremor caused by the nuptial touch of Siva. This is against our conception of Godhead as free from perspiration and other human physical defects. His description of

the nuptial bliss of Parvati is another instance of over-humanisation and over-concretisation.

It must be further mentioned that, though Kalidasa's soul was finely alive to the influences and graces of the spiritual life and though he was well versed in the sublime religious lore in India, he has not given to us devotional lyric poems and songs of palpitating and pregnant sweetness. He had inspiring models before him in the marvellous hymns and poems in the Upanishads breathing the loftiest fervour of devotion. His poems of spiritual life are comprehensive and beautiful but lack the authentic note of religious fervour and spiritual sweetness.

Thus the few defects of Kalidasa were due partly to himself and partly to his age. But what are they in comparison with the positive graces and qualities of his art. Well may we say of his as he said of the Himalaya in the Kumarasambhava:

एको हि दोषो गुणसंनिपाते
निमज्जतीन्दोः किरणेष्विवाङ्कः । (I, 3)

(One fault is immersed and lost among a multitude of graces. Just as the dark spot in the moon is lost in the splendour of the lunar rays).



CHAPTER V.

Kalidasa as a Poet of Nature.

I have when dealing with *Ritusamhara*, described some of the general aspects of Kalidasa's nature-poetry and dealt with some of the considerations applicable to it. I shall now deal in greater detail with the special beauties and excellences of his poetry of nature. Mr. A. W. Ryder says with true insight and justice : "I have already hinted at the wonderful balance in Kalidasa's character, by virtue of which he found himself equally at home in a palace and in a wilderness. I know not with whom to compare him in this ; even Shakespeare, for all his magical insight into natural beauty, is primarily a poet of the human heart. That can hardly be said of Kàlidasa, nor can it be said that he is primarily a poet of natural beauty. The two characters unite in him, it might almost be said, chemically. The matter which I am clumsily en-

deavouring to make plain is beautifully epitomised in *the Cloud-Messenger*. The former half is a description of external nature, yet it is interwoven with human feeling; the latter half is a picture of a human heart, yet the picture is framed in natural beauty. So exquisitely is the thing done that none can say which half is superior. Of those who read this perfect poem in the original text, some are moved by the one, some by the other. Kalidasa understood in the fifth century what Europe did not learn until the nineteenth, and even now comprehends only imperfectly, that the world was not made for man, that man reaches his full stature only as he realises the dignity and worth of the life that is not human."

The acute and sympathetic critic referred to above has seized with insight the central fact in Kalidasa's Nature-poetry but he has not realised the real source of Kalidasa's excellence or the real extent of such excellence. Kalidasa derived his attitude and outlook from the genius of his race. To the Indian mind human life is but a link in a series of lives and in the totality of creation. Human life derives its value and significance only when linked to the

life of nature. It is equally true that the life of nature has no significance or value when viewed in itself and out of relation to human life. In fact but for the eye of man the phenomena of light would be but one set of vibrations of energy and the phenomena of sound would be another set of vibrations. It is the senses and the mind of man which turn the vibrations into sensations of delight. Every soul is thus a centre of transformation whereby mere energy is transfigured into a higher order of values and lifted to a higher plane of being. The Indian has gone further and found out the centre of divine radiance in which light alone both man and nature derive their value and illumination and live and move and have their being. He rose to the height of the Upanishadic declaration येन सूर्यस्तपति तेजसेद्धः (Lit by His glory the sun shines) and तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति (By His radiance all this seen universe shines). He cried out in a passion of overpowering vison of truth to the sun : "By this golden disc of the solar orb the face of Truth is hidden. O Lord, remove this golden disc so that my vision of the glory within may be unobstructed." Gather thy blinding burning rays and put them by. Let me behold thy eternal and auspicious and effulgent form. Lo !

The soul of the solar orb and my soul are one."

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये । पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् । समूह तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि । योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥

Another equally famous description of the sun shows how the sun has become all the manifold variety that we see all around us, how he is the adored of all and the teacher of all and the refuge of all, how he is the supreme vivifier and illuminator, and how he is the life of all.

विश्वरूपं हरिणं जातवेदसं
परायणं ज्योतिरेकं तपन्तम् ।
सहस्ररश्मिः शतधा वर्तमानः
प्राणः प्रजानां उदयत्येष सूर्यः ॥

It is thus clear that the Hindu never thought of Man and Nature and God as being apart from one another. In Kalidasa's work we see the poetic mood passing with a lightning quickness from the

love of man for nature to the love of nature for man and from the love of both to the love of God.

To understand Kalidasa's Nature-poetry we must have regard to its evolution along with the growth of his genius. In *Ritu Samhara* we have the work of a youthful poet who loves nature much but who loves woman more. Woman is too much in the foreground in the poem. Her dress and decoration, her beauty and her gracefulness, and her love and her delight run through all the seasons. But in *Kumarasambhava* we find the life of Nature and the life divine in mutual relation. The scene of the poem is laid in the most sublime spot in creation. No other poem in the world has soared so high or dared so much. We find the holy father of mountains made holier by the penance of God Siva and by the even more wonderful penance of Goddess Uma. Again and again occur in it verses full of throbs of ecstacy in praise of the holy Ganges. The personages that fill the poem are gods and sages and above them all are God Siva and Goddess Uma and God Subrahmanya. The presence of ordinary men and women—mortal and of limited purity and loveliness—would be an intrusion and a desecration.

But in *Meghasandesa* we find the poet beginning to link up Man and Nature in a new and original manner. The interlinking of the life of nature and the life of man is shown to be a necessity and a delight. In the first part of the poem the love-lorn lover lingers over the loveliness of creation and finds a balm to his bruised heart. In the second part of the poem which is full of the recollected delight and the anticipated bliss of human love we have a joyful and serene back-ground which seems to be a guarantee of a joyful and serene consummation of the lover's yearning. When we come to *Raghuvamsa* we find the poet's art has risen to a higher plane and has assumed a wider range. The life of nature is shown in the very first canto in relation not only to individual human life but to the larger life of the state as well. The poet hints at the auspicious results which would flow from the interlinkedness of town and *tapovana*, of social and super-social ideals. He makes the poem end in urbanisation and drink and debauchery to show how the life of man cut off from the life of nature and the life divine is sure to end in individual devitalisation and social wreckage and political disaster. But it is in *Sakuntala* that we find the poet's mellowest

music and message. This great play is full of intense human life and is yet steeped in the life of nature. Kanva is represented in the beginning of the play as having gone to a spot of natural purity and beauty and holiness to avert a catastrophe threatened to Sakuntala. The very first Act describes the interlinking of the life of the individual and the life of nature, of town and of tapovana, of the life of the senses and the life of the soul. After the fitful fever of the love of the senses is over, we are lifted into the higher heaven of natural beauty and spiritual life. We are left in the last Act in the mid-heaven of Hemakuta and in Maricha's hermitage, when the reunion is not only the reunion of the lovers but also the reunion of the life of the individual and the life of Nature in her grandest and noblest manifestations.

It is not my purpose here to trace the growth of nature-poetry in western literature or to show the course of the attempts by western poets to link up love of nature with humanism or with the note of philosophy or religion, because my main object here is to describe Kalidasa's attitude to nature. But I may point out briefly the course of the attitude

of the western poets towards nature. In Shakespeare there are brief and exquisite descriptions of nature but his chief interest and delight were in the exploration of the resources of the human heart and the delineations of the affections and emotions and passions of men and women. His philosophical and religious outlook comes out only in flashes if at all. In Milton also we find only a few sketches descriptive of nature, though they are of exquisite delicacy and loveliness. It is only in Thomson, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Tennyson and the later poets that we find nature studied with minute care and attention and love for her own sake as well as in relation to the human soul. In Thomson we have a poem solely devoted to the seasons but though his poem excels in describing mass effects we do not find exquisite poetic and imaginative touches as in Shakespeare or Milton, or a sense of a brooding companionable soul which is described by Wordsworth and Shelley as animating Nature and pouring the balm of peace on the agonised and travailing human spirit or that minute observation and scientific accuracy of description which delights us in Tennyson and the later poets. Wordsworth's great distinction is that he saw and

sang about the soul in Nature. By him such a living presence was "felt in the blood and felt along the heart". It passed "even into my purer mind, with tranquil restoration". To him the love of nature became a flaming passion of calm ecstasy in which

"We are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things."

He sings:

"For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-times
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things".

This famous passage shows us the "master-light of his seeing". This realisation calmed and enraptured him into moods of tranquil blessedness; they "flashed upon his inward eye which is the bliss of solitude," and made him realise how "our noisy years are moments in the being of the eternal Silence" and enabled him to have "sight of that immortal sea which brought us hither". It was the special glory of Wordsworth to have given a new orientation to Nature-poetry in universal literature. What in him was the animating principle of Thought in Nature was conceived by Shelley to be the principle of love. Shelley delighted in describing tempests and storms and the ocean and the empyrean. He pictured in his concept of the union of Prometheus and Asia the communion of the spirit of Man and the spirit of Nature. In later English poetry the domination of science added the note of pessimism while it added the note of accurate observation and description. A similar development of idea is found in other literatures in the west as well.

But nowhere else do we find the sublime height of Nature-poetry which we see in the Vedas and specially in the Upanishads. The imperishable and

infinite Bliss which is immanent in Man and Nature and is yet transcendent has been sung there in passionate verse which throb and quiver with the uncontainable and uncontrollable rush of spiritual emotion. This idea of an immanent and transcendental soul which ensouls the totality of creation and which communes with the human soul in Nature's spots of perfect beauty and sublimity and solitude is not prominently seen in Kalidasa. We could and should expect it in him as a great original poet who was a child of his race and soil and who was one of the great culmination-points of the Hindu genius. His sensuousness, his love of human emotions, his unwillingness to go away from the world of man to lose himself in the world of nature were responsible for this deficiency in his poetry of nature. In fact he is more preoccupied with the phenomena of nature than with Nature as a whole; and even in regard to the phenomena of nature he deals not with mass effects but with individual manifestations of loveliness; and even there he is fond of detecting human feelings and activities, and relating such phenomena to the world of human emotions. We do not find in him sublime descriptions of the ocean in all its moods of calm and storm, or of the wild

tempests in their mad career of destruction, or of the gorgeous pageants of sunrise and sunset in the eastern or western skies, or of the sublimities of the heaven-kissing mountains in their speechless but eloquent loveliness by which the mind is rapt into a tense mood of joy and lifted above itself, or of the vast tingling silences of the stupendous forests of the land.

But there are certain general aspects of his nature-poetry which are noble and beautiful and unique. He knew each of the great manifestations of Nature. Indian philosophy and religion besides affirming the interpenetration and illumination of the cosmos by the supernal light of the Universal Soul say also that each of the major phenomena of nature is ensouled by a deity who is a cosmic functionary to whom God has allotted and assigned a function for the welfare of beings. Kalidasa says that the Himalaya is a Devatatma *i.e.* ensouled by an animating divine principle. He says in Kumarasambhava canto VI verse 58 that the Himalaya has a living form as a deity and an inanimate form as a mountain (द्विरूपामिव मे वपुः). The Ganges is described by him again and again as a river and as a goddess. Spring is both a god and

a phenomenon of rejuvenation. His lifelong bosom friends are Kama and Rati—the animating principles of Love and Delight which rule the realm of the human heart.

Thus he is fully aware of the aliveness of Nature, though he does not thrill and make us thrill with the vastnesses and sublimities of nature or with a sense of the principle of Sachchidananda ensouling the entirety of Nature. In canto III of Kumarasambhava we are given a charming description of the new rejuvenation of life in Spring. The responsiveness of Nature to the human soul is admirably described in Act IV of Sakuntala. The Vanadevatas (forest-deities) bless Sakuntala and give her gifts of shining silks and radiant jewels. A cuckoo's note conveys the message of the forest to her. Nay aerial voices carry to her the blessings of the forest deities to their beloved darling. The poet says further :

उद्गलितदर्भकवला मृगाः परित्यक्तनर्तना मयूराः ।
अपसृतपाण्डुपत्रा मुञ्चन्त्यश्रूणीव लताः ॥

(Sakuntala, Act IV, verse 11)

(The deer stand aghast with their mouthfuls of grass dropping out of their mouths ; the peacocks have

given up their dances; the creepers shed their midleaves and they seem to shed tears). Nature is once again described in Act VI of Sakuntala as bearing and applying its balm to the wounded spirit of the penitent king. In Meghasandesa the description of Nature as imagined by the disconsolate lover gives him a new calm and a new courage. (Thus in these masterpieces we find Kalidasa's nature-poetry reaching a higher level than in *Ritu-Samhara*) But perhaps the highest height is reached in Act VII of Sakuntala. We reach there a sublime height where we have neither the travails of earth nor the pleasures of heaven but the whole place is full of calm and peace and penance and adoration, and the king cries out in joy: "स्वर्गादधिकतरं निर्वृतिस्थानम् । अमृतह्रदमिवावगाढोऽस्मि ॥ ((This place is higher than even heaven as a seat of peace and bliss. I feel as if I have had a plunge into a pool of nectar.) The description of such a responsive thrill of Nature to the soul of man cannot be called by the words "Pathetic fallacy" applied thereto by Ruskin. Such a thrill is one of the great realities of life and the poets describe a reality and not a phantasy when they describe it in glowing verse.

I must stop such general discussion here as I wish to deal at some length with the poet's specific descriptions of nature. Mr. R. E. Robinson says well : "His eye singled out like a prism all the rich glowing tints of life's colours, and his brain, receiving them, as if it had been a palette, translated them into descriptions of jewel-like beauty." Even such an able commentator as Mallinatha, excellent as are his endowment and discernment, has failed to understand the poet's heart, evidently because mere book-learning fails when we have to understand the power of vision of a great imaginative poet. In Raghuvamsa, II, 17, the poet says : श्यामायमानानि वनानि पश्यन्. He refers to the blue haze of the denser forest seen from a distance towards nightfall. But Mallinatha says that the poet refers to the darkness due to the existence of boars, peacocks etc. Without a kinship of emotional mood, we cannot realise the beauty of Kalidasa's descriptions of nature.

In *Ritusamhara* we find a series of five sketches of nature in the course of the revolving year. They are so vivid that a painter can keep steps with the poet and create a companion painting to illustrate each picturesque verse. Though I have

referred to the poem in my earlier volume, I may group together here the initial stanza relating to each season.

प्रचण्डसूर्यः स्पृहणीयचन्द्रमाः
सदावगाहक्षतवारिसंचयः ।
दिनान्तरम्योऽभ्युपशान्तमन्मथो
निदाघकालोऽयमुपागतः प्रिये ॥

ससीकराम्भोधरमत्तकुञ्जर-
स्तडित्पताकोऽशनिशब्दमर्दलः ।
समागतो राजवदुद्धतद्युति-
र्घनागमः कामिजनप्रियः प्रिये ॥

काशांशुका विकचपद्ममनोज्ञवक्त्रा
सोन्मादहंसरवनूपुरनादरम्या ।
आपक्वशालिरुचिरा तनुगात्रयष्टिः
प्राप्ता शरन्नववधूरिव रूपरम्या ॥

नवप्रवालोद्गमसस्यरम्यः
प्रफुल्ललोध्रः परिपक्वशालिः ।
विलीनपद्मः प्रपतत्तुषारो
हेमन्तकालः समुपागतोऽयम् ॥

प्ररूढशाल्यंशुचयैर्मनोहरं
    क्वचित्स्थितक्रौञ्चनिनादराजितम् ।
प्रकामकामं प्रमदाजनप्रियं
    वरोरु कालं शिशिराह्वयं शृणु ॥

प्रफुल्लचूताङ्कुरतीक्ष्णसायको
    द्विरेफमालाविलसद्धनुर्गुणः ।
मनांसि वेद्धुं सुरतप्रसङ्गिनां
    वसन्तयोद्धा समुपागतः प्रिये ॥

(O beloved, here is come Summer in which the Sun is fierce and the moon is adorable, in which pools of water are incessantly disturbed by eager bathers, in which the day is delightful only at the close, and in which love is full of langour.

O beloved, here has come the rainy season beloved of lovers, with splendour like a king, with elephant-like clouds, with banner-like lightning, and with drum-like thunder.

Like a new bride in her beauty has come autumn with her dress of kasa flowers, with the lovely lotus as her face, with the sounds of swans as the sounds of her anklets, lovely in her ripeness of corn ,and slender in frame.

Now comes winter with sprouting plants and blossomed Lodhra trees and ripened harvests and shut lotuses and falling snows.

O beloved! hear about the dewy season which is lovely with the brightness of ripened grain, which is sweet with the sounds of *krauncha* birds hid in near trees, in which love is in the ascendent, and which is loved by women.

O beloved, here comes the warrior Spring, with the mango shoot as his keen arrow and with the string of bees as his bowstring to strike at the hearts of lovers as his target.)

Kalidasa's other poems and plays also abound in fine descriptions of the various seasons. Spring is beautifully described in canto III of Kumarasambhava and in Act III of *Malavikagnimitra*: In Act III verse 5 he says that the asoka flower surpasses the paint on women's lips in crimson loveliness and that the bee-sipped tilaka flowers conquer the *tilaka* (caste-mark) on a woman's forehead in beauty and that hence Spring looks with disdain on a woman's decoration of her face. (सावज्ञेव मुखप्रसाधनविधौ श्रीर्माधवी योषितां). In Vikramorvasiya Act II Verse 7 he describes Spring in its beautiful ripe-

ness between its girlhood and matronhood. Summer is described in Sakuntala Act I. The rainy season in all its variety of coolness and charm is described in many places in a marvellous manner in *Megha-sandesa.* The autumn is described in Raghuvamsa, IV, 17, as having the lotus as its royal umbrella and the Kasa flower as its yaktail fan (पुण्डरीकातपत्रस्तं विकसत्काशचामरः).

Kalidasa describes the phenomena of the sky with ever-recurring delight. Here again it is not the mystery of the totality of the sky and the sun and the moon and the stars that fires his vision but their individual glories flash on him and on us through his words. There is not to be found in his work such a superb invocation to the sun as is found in the Upanishads or as is found in the glorious stanza of Bhavabhuti (कल्याणानां त्वमसि महसां भाजनं विश्वमूर्ते). The ever-old and ever-new wonders of sunrise and sunset with their symphony of ethereal tints are not rendered by him with adequate power. Moonset and sunrise at the same time is described by him in Sakuntala Act IV verse 1. Noon is described with effect in Malavikagnimitra Act II verse 12 and Vikramorvasiya Act II verse 22. The swans close their eyes

beneath the shadow of loturs flowers; the doves desert their holes; the peacocks seek to drink the spray from the fountain or stand at the foot of trees; bees pierce the karnikara buds and rest inside; and parrots in their cages crave for a drink of water. Thus these pictures are clever but somewhat conventional. The calm of sunsets appealed more to the poet. In cantos I and II of *Raghuvamsa* and in Vikramorvasiya Act III verse 2 we find fine descriptions of sunset life on earth but not of the sunsets themselves. In canto II verse 15 he describes the sunset as being red like a tender leaf. In canto VIII verse 54 of Kumarasambhava he describes it as being red like a bloody battlefield. Nor do we find but rarely in his poems the solemn feelings evoked by the glory of a hushed starlit night. The cloudland is well-described in Meghasandesa. The poet describes a raincloud as resembling a playful elephant or a detached peak of a hill (Part I verses 2, 14). The cloud is illumined by the rainbow which shines like a setting of gems (verse 15). It sees with its lightning-eyes and speaks with its thunder-voice (Part II, verses 20 and 37). In Raghuvamsa, IV, 5, he describes how white rainless clouds scatter and disappear before the path of the sun. In canto

XVII of Kumarasambhava the poet describes the massing of rainclouds and the downpour of rain when describing the Varunaśtra. It is, however, in regard to the moon, that we find the glow of love and passion in Kalidasa's descriptions. He is *par excellence* the poet of the moon. In Raghuvamsa, VI, 22 he says that even though the night is adorned by stars and planets, it is glorious only because of the moon (नक्षत्रताराग्रहसंकुलाऽपि ज्योतिष्मती चन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः). I have shown already that he describes how the moon's light is fed at the glory of the sun and glows more and more and with a fuller and intenser glory every day. A beautiful invocation to the moon appears in *Vikramorvasiya* Act III verse 7:

रविमाविशते सतां क्रियायै
सुधया तर्पयते पितॄन्सुरांश्च ।
तमसां निशि मूर्च्छतां निहन्त्रे
हरचूडानिहितात्मने नमस्ते ॥

(Adoration to thee, who mingle thy beams with those of the sun. So that holy ceremonies may be performed then, who gladdens with nectar the spirits and the gods, who slays darkness to help those who suffer in utter darkness, and who shinest

on the head of God Siva Himself). In Act III verse 6, of Vikramorvasiya the fleeing of darkness from the rays of the moon which is yet below the horizon is beautifully described. But the most passionate and exquisite description of the moon is in canto VIII of Kumarasambhava :

नोर्ध्वमीक्षणगतिर्न चाप्यधो नाभितो न पुरतो न पृष्ठतः ।
लोक एष तिमिरौघवेष्टितो गर्भवास इव वर्तते निशि ॥

शुद्धमाविलमवस्थितं चलं वक्रमार्जवगुणान्वितं च यत् ।
सर्वमेव तमसा समीकृतं धिङ्महत्त्वमसतां हृतान्तरम् ॥

अङ्गुलीभिरिव केशसंचयं संनिगृह्य तिमिरं मरीचिभिः ।
कुड्मलीकृतसरोजलोचनं चुम्बतीव रजनीमुखं शशी ॥

रक्तभावमपहाय चन्द्रमा जात एष परिशुद्धमण्डलः ।
विक्रिया न खलु कालदोषजा निर्मलप्रकृतिषु स्थिरोदया ॥

उन्नतेषु शशिनः प्रभा स्थिता निम्नसंश्रयपरं निशातमः ।
नूनमात्मसदृशी प्रकल्पिता वेधसा हि गुणदोषयोर्गतिः ॥

कल्पवृक्षशिखरेषु संप्रति प्रस्फुरद्भिरिव पश्य सुन्दरि ।
हारयष्टिरचनामिवांशुभिः कर्तुमागतकुतूहलः शशी ॥

एतदुच्छ्वसितपीतमैन्दवं वोढुमक्षममिव प्रभारसम् ।
मुक्तषट्पदविरावमञ्जसा भिद्यते कुमुदमा निबन्धनात् ॥

एष चारुमुखि योग्यतारया युज्यते तरलबिम्बया शशी ।
साध्वसादुपगतप्रकम्पया कन्ययेव नवदीक्षया वरः ॥

(VIII, verses 56, 57, 63, 65, 66, 68, 70, 73).

(The eyes have no way up or down or around or before or behind. In this dark night the world, surrounded by darkness, lies like a child in *utero*. In it the pure and the impure, the fixed and the moving, the crooked and the straight are made equal. Thus doth the might of the wicked abolish all distinctions. The Moon, holding back as it were the black tresses of Night with his rays as fingers, seems to kiss the face of Night while the lotuses of her eyes are shut into bud with delight. Very soon the lunar orb has cast aside its tint of scarlet passion and has become full of a radiant whiteness. Thus the change that comes over the pure owing to the evil influence of time doth not persist long. The moon's splendour shines on the uplands but darkness fills the lowlands. Thus hath the creator assigned suitable fortune to the high and the low. The moon, by his beams splintering through the

shadow of the leaves of the tree, seems to attempt to string a necklace of pearls with a string of black silk. The kumuda flower blossoms suddenly from its bud state with a cry of joy expressed through the sound of the released bee, as if it could not contain the sweetness of the lunar radiance which is drunk in full by it. The moon is now united to a quivering star, just as a young bridegroom is wedded to a shy and trembling bride.)

Let me now descend from the skies. I have already stated that Kalidasa does not attempt to describe sweeping gales and devastating tempests. The one exception is that which occurs in canto XVII of Kumarasambhava where he describes the use of the magical weapon presided over by the God of mind. He says that at once there arose a terrific roar as if the end of the world were at hand. The sky was filled with dust and the sun was hid. The white royal umbrellas held over the heads of the gods were wrenched away and were scattered in mid-air like a scattered group of swans. The white flags and pennons of the armies of the gods were swept away and filled the sky with the radiance of the Gangetic flood. But such a description

is a rare thing with him. He delights in describing the cool and fragrant and gentle south wind in spring time. He says in Malavikagnimitra Act III verse 4 that the southern breeze seems to touch him gently like the touch of a soft and cool and loving hand. In Sakuntala Act IV verse 4 the king is described as seeking the cool and perfumed southern breeze to soothe his fevered limbs. In Kumarasambhava, III, 25, the poet says that the southern breeze that blew over the Himalaya then was the sigh of the queen of the South when the sun left her palace and went away to the queen of the North.

The ocean does not figure much in Kalidasa's works. There is a description of it in canto XIII of Raghuvamsa but it has not got the swell of the tide of joy and inspiration. He describes the sea as the source of rain and the birthplace of the moon and the couch of Vishnu. He describes the whales blowing clouds of water through their noses. He speaks of conch and coral. He says further in two fine stanzas ;

तां तामवस्थां प्रतिपद्यमानं स्थितं दश व्याप्य दिशो महिम्ना ।
विष्णोरिवास्यानवधारणीयमीदृक्तया रूपमियत्तया वा ॥

मुखार्पणेषु प्रकृतिप्रगल्भाः स्वयं तरङ्गाधरदानदक्षः ।
अनन्यसामान्यकलत्रवृत्तिः पिबत्यसौ पाययते च सिन्धूः ॥
(Verses 5 and 9)

(Its form, like the form of Vishnu, is infinite in its variations of being and fills the ends of the earth and cannot be defined or limited in any manner. When his faithful wives—the rivers—lift their mouths to him with love, the Ocean-God imparts and receives kisses with the tidal wave as his mouth).

Kalidasa is more at home in mountains—and especially in his beloved Himalaya. The Ramagiri and the many hills on the route of the cloud and Kailasa are described in Meghasandesa. Hemakuta is described in Vikramorvasiya and with a wonderful wealth of descriptive power in Sakuntala. But it is in Kumarasambhava that we have rapturous descriptions of Himalaya and Kailasa. Even here the vast and stupendous solitudes, the crown of snows, the flush of sunrise and sunset on the eternal peaks, the cataracts and the avalanches and the glaciers, the uplift and leap of the spirit when face to face with loftiness and grandeur and sublimity are not sung by Kalidasa with hushed and reverential

voice. We hear rather about the gems in the mountains, the clouds on the slopes frightening the siddhas to the tops, the hunters hunting lions, the wind sounding through the holes in the bamboos, the luminous plants giving light to the lovers in the night, the darkness in the caves, etc. But yet the description is attractive and beautiful so far as it goes. The poet loves the mountain scenery and the forests and the hermitages there and kindles an answering love in our hearts. The penance-spots of Siva and Parvati are described with evident delight and adoration. The forest-hermitages are described with equal love in Sakuntala also. In Raghuvamsa he describes the still forest bathed in morning dews (XV, 66).

But when Kalidasa goes to the river the Ganges, he loses himself. The love of the Ganges was a haunting passion with him. He returns to it again and again. I shall quote here only a few of the wonderful verses in Kumarasambhava about the Ganga. In canto XIII of Raghuvamsa he describes the Ganges in a marvellous stanza in verse 48 and the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna in many fine stanzas. But the Kumarasambhava verses are in a class apart.

स्वर्गारोहणनिःश्रेणिर्मोक्षमार्गाधिदेवता ।
उदारदुरितोद्धारहारिणी दुर्गतारिणी ॥

महेश्वरजटाजूटवासिनी पापनाशिनी ।
सरागान्वयनिर्वाणकारिणी धर्मधारिणी ॥

विष्णुपादोदकोद्भूता ब्रह्मलोकादुपागता ।
त्रिभिः स्रोतोभिरश्रान्ता पुनाना भुवनत्रयम् ॥

गङ्गावारिणि कल्याणकारिणि श्रमहारिणि ।
स मग्नो निर्वृतिं प्राप पुण्यभारिणि तारिणि ॥

(X 29 to 31 and 36)

(The Ganga is the ladder unto heaven. She is the deity presiding over the route to paradise. She frees us from even the blackest sins. She enables us to cross the Samsara. She resides in the matted hair of Mahesvara. She destroys all sins. She gives the bliss of liberation even to the lineage of the man who is immersed in worldliness and desire. She is the support of Dharma. Sprung from the foot of Vishnu and come from the world of Brahma, she tirelessly purifies the three worlds. Bathing in her waters which are the cause of auspiciousness and which soothe all langour and fatigue and which gives merit

to all and is the saviour of all, he attained the heighest delight).

Animals and birds come in for a great deal of careful and minute description in Kalidasa's works. I have already referred to his marvellous description of the dove. In Sakuntala Act I we come across the classic descriptions of the fleeing fawn and the pursuing horse and chariot. War horses are described in Raghuvamsa IV, 56. Two fine descriptions of the elephant appear in Sakuntala Act I and in Raghuvamsa canto V. The whale is described in canto XIII verse 10 in Raghuvamsa. A special mention should however be made of the very beautiful description of the cow in Raghuvamsa I, 83 to 85. The Sarasas are described in Raghuvamsa, I, 4, as flying so as to form a supportless festoon. But it is the bees and the cuckoos that figure most in his works. The classic description of the bee in Sakuntala, I, verse 20 is well-known. I shall quote only one verse descriptive of the cuckoos.

त्यजत मानमलं बत विग्रहैर्न पुनरेति गतं चतुरं वयः ।
परभृताभिरितीव निवेदिते स्मरमते रमते स्म वधूजनः ॥

(Raghuvamsa IX, 47)

("Give up your indignation. Enough of dispute. The season of youth and enjoyment once gone never returns"—thus sing the cuckoos, conveying the edict of Kama. The maidens hear it and enjoy the bliss of love).

Kalidasa takes a special delight in describing particular trees and especially in singing the lovely and fragrant realm of flowers. His verse is of course full of the lotus and *Neelotpala* and the *Kumuda* flowers. In Act V of Malavikagnimitra he refers to Kusuma Lakshmi and Kusuma Sowbhagam (the glory of the flowerland). In Vikramorvasiya Act II verse 7 he describes the kuravaka and asoka and mango flowers in an accurate and minute way. The *karnikara* flower is described in Kumarasambhava, III, 28. The wealth of flowers in spring is in fact most fully and beautifully described in canto III of Kumarasambhava. The decoration of women by flowers is finely described in Meghasandesa, II, 2. He is the only Sanskrit poet who has described the saffron flower that grows in Kashmir (Raghuvamsa, IV, 67).

I may refer also to a few other features of Kalidasa's description of Nature. The filming of

glass by humid air is described in Raghuvamsa, XIV, 37. The spreading of oil on water is described in Raghuvamsa, XIV, 38. I may in conclusion refer here to Vikramorvasiya Act IV where many aspects of forest scenery are beautifully described in great detail including birds, animals, streams etc. One fine verse describes that Urvasi must have been transformed into the impetuous foaming river.

तरङ्गभ्रूभङ्गा क्षुभितविहगश्रेणिरशना
विकर्षन्ती फेनं वसनमिव संरंभशिथिलम् ।
पदाविद्धं यान्ती स्खलितमभिसंधाय बहुशो
नदीरूपेणेयं ध्रुवमसहमाना परिणता ॥

(Act IV verse 52)

(With wave as her curved eye-brow, with the disturbed group of birds as her waist-band, dragging the foam with her as her cloth loosened at a sudden rush, and fleeing along with irregular and faltering steps, she, the impetuous one, has been evidently transformed into a river).

Mr. Ryder whom I quoted at the begnning of this chapter says again: "Rarely has a man walked our earth who observed the phenomena of living

nature as accurately as he, though his accuracy was of course that of a poet, not that of a scientist,...... Fully to appreciate Kalidasa's poetry one must have spent some weeks at least among wild mountains and forests untouched by man; there the conviction grows that trees and flowers are indeed individuals, fully conscious of a personal life and happy in that life. The return to urban surroundings makes the vision fade; yet the memory remains, like a great love or a glimpse of mystic insight, as an intuitive conviction of a higher truth. (Kalidasa's knowledge of nature is not only sympathetic, it is also minutely accurate.) Not only are the snows and windy music of the Himalayas, the mighty current of the sacred Ganges, his possession; his too are smaller streams and trees and every littlest flower. It is delightful to imagine a meeting between Kalidasa and Darwin. They would have understood each other perfectly; for in each the same wealth of imagination worked with the same wealth of observed fact...No doubt it is easier for a Hindu, with his almost instinctive belief in reincarnation, (to feel that all life, from plant to God is truly one; yet none, even among Hindus, has expressed this feeling with such convincing beauty as has Kalidasa".



CHAPTER VI.

Kalidasa as a Poet of Beauty.

IT is a natural transition of thought from the consideration of Kalidasa as a poet of nature to that of Kalidasa as a poet of beauty. The search for beauty is a natural instinct of man and is a poignant passion with poets. But however much beauty appeals to the eye and the mind and the heart and the soul, it is difficult to realise in a clear and vivid manner what it is and what are its elements and what are its meaning and its message and its value to the soul. It is even more difficult to state in a clear and intelligible way to another what is felt to be truth in regard to such beauty.

Kalidasa knew the real secret of that wonderful and evanescent phenomenon. He knew that the radiance which lights up form and face in men and women—and especially in women—is a portion

of the splendour that is seen also in nature. While the splendours of the sky are unvarying, the beauty of the tender leaf and flower is full of transience and charm like human loveliness. He frequently compares the beauty of women to the beauty of tender leaves and blossomed creepers.

आवर्जिता किंचिदिव स्तनाभ्यां
वासो वसाना तरुणार्करागम् ।
पर्याप्तपुष्पस्तबकावनम्रा
संचारिणी पल्लविनी लतेव ॥

(Kumarasambhava, III, 54)

(Bent slightly by her budding breasts and wearing a garment bright like the rising sun, she came like a moving creeper bowed by the slender weight of blooms).

अधरः किसलयरागः कोमलविटपानुसारिणौ बाहू ।
कुसुममिव लोभनीयं यौवनमङ्गेषु संनद्धम् ॥

(Sakuntala, Act I)

(Her under-lip is red like a tender leaf; her arms are like the lovely branches of a tree; and youth, desirable as a flower, is present in her limbs).

यावत्पुनरियं सुभ्रूरुत्सुकाभिः समुत्सुका ।
सखीभिर्याति संपर्कं लताभिः श्रीरिवार्तवी ॥

(Vikramorvasiya, I, 14)

Till this affectionate lovely-browed lady meets her affectionate friends like the affectionate beauty of Spring meeting the eager creepers).

कास्विदवगुण्ठनवती नातिपरिस्फुटशरीरलावण्या ।
मध्ये तपोधनानां किसलयमिव पाण्डुपत्राणाम् ॥

(Sakuntala Act V, verse 13)

(Who is this veiled lady whose beauty of person is not very apparent owing to the veil and who shines amidst her ascetic companions like a tender leaf among dried white leaves?).

Similarly when describing the beauty of leaf and flower, the analogy of human loveliness is brought in by the poet.

लग्नद्विरेफाञ्जनभक्तिचित्रं मुखे मधुश्रीस्तिलकं प्रकाश्य ।
रागेण बालारुणकोमलेन चूतप्रवालोष्ठमलंचकार ॥

(Kumarasambhava, III, 30)

The Beauty of Spring made her forehead lovely with the bee as a tilaka (castemark) and beautified her mango-leaf-lip with a redness bright as that of dawn).

मुग्धत्वस्य च यौवनस्य च सखे मध्ये मधुश्रीः स्थिता ॥

(Vikramorvasiya, Act, II, verse 7)

(The Beauty of Spring is midway between girlhood and youth).

Kalidasa says about the season of youth and beauty :

असंभृतं मण्डनमङ्गयष्टेरनासवाख्यं करणं मदस्य ।
कामस्य पुष्पव्यतिरिक्तमस्त्रं बाल्यात्परं साथ वयः प्रपेदे ॥

(Kumarasambhava I, 31)

(She attained that season of life which is next to girlhood, which is the natural jewel of the willowy form, which is the non-vinous intoxicant of man's senses and mind, and which is the arrow of Cupid more powerful than his arrows of flowers).

The poet thus knows and says that the radiance which lights up the human frame is a portion of the general radiance which robes the frame of things, though in the case of living beings the radiance is as evanescent as it is attractive.

What, then, is beauty? A well-known Sanskrit stanza says :

क्षणे क्षणे यन्नवतामुपैति तदेव रूपं रमणीयतायाः

(Whatever becomes ever-new from moment to moment—that is the essence of Beauty).

Beauty is a dynamic quality and is the dynamic outward expression of the static bliss of the soul. It is not merely skin-deep. It is not a mere sexual *maya* for purposes of race. Softness, symmetry, and splendour are among its characteristics but are not of its essence. It is soul-deep, and it is full of ever-new and ever-fresh surprises for its worshipper. It fills him, when it is truly itself, with humility, purity, longing, and delight. It is an end in itself and is not a means to an end. The soul delights in it because the bliss-element of the soul has the fullest play in its presence and under its power. But the element of bliss is different from that of pleasure. Pleasure is of the body, but bliss is of the soul. Pleasure implies a keen conscious call of the body but bliss implies a thorough absence of self-consciousness and a negation of the consciousness of the body. Beauty is a manifestation of the bliss of the soul and evokes the bliss of the soul. That is God is called by all the names Ananda, Prema, and Saundarya (Bliss, Love and Beauty). He is described in the

Upanishads as *Santam Sivam Sundaram* and *Anandarupam amritam yad vibhati.*

It is therefore necessary to bear in mind that Kalidasa's concept of beauty is a spiritual conception. It was this spiritual attitude that urged him to describe beauty as being in alliance with purity on the one hand and with love on the other hand. In Sakuntala Act II verse 9 he says :

चित्रे निवेश्य परिकल्पितसत्त्वयोगा
रूपोच्चयेन मनसा विधिना कृता नु ।
स्त्रीरत्नसृष्टिरपरा प्रतिभाति सा मे
धातुर्विभुत्वमनुचिन्त्य वपुश्च तस्याः ॥

(She must be the mental creation of the Creator who by his mental power transferred the totality of loveliness to the painting of the loveliest of women and then endowed the picture with life. Remembering the Creator's power and the beauty of her form, I think that she is feminine creation of a different order altogether from ordinary women).

In Vikramorvasiya Act I verse 10 the poet goes even a step further and says :

अस्याः सर्गविधौ प्रजापतिरभूच्चन्द्रो नु कान्तिप्रदः
शृङ्गारैकरसः स्वयं नु मदनो मासो नु पुष्पाकरः ।
वेदाभ्यासजडः कथं स विषयव्यावृत्तकौतूहलो
निर्मातुं प्रभवेन्मनोहरमिदं रूपं पुराणो मुनिः ॥

(In creating her the Creator should have been the splendour-flinging Moon or Cupid who is love incarnate or Spring who is the abode of blossoms. How could the ancient sage who had become dull with scriptural study and whose longing had turned away from lovely objects, have created this heart-stealing form !)

Thus in these verses the poet hints that beauty has the freshness and glory of a picture or a mental creation and is not of the earth earthy and partakes of the elements of splendour and charm and softness and steals our hearts away.

Kalidasa gives us a clear and original vision of the vital and essential elements of beauty. Flawlessness is a fine element. In Malavikagnimitra Act II, he says : अहो सर्वास्ववस्थास्वनवद्यता रूपस्य (How flawless is beauty in all its attitudes !) He says again in the same Act: अहो सर्वास्ववस्थासु चारुता शोभां पुष्यति । (In

all its attitudes beauty has crescent splendour). The splendour is natural and not artificial (अक्लिष्टकान्ति —Sakuntala Act V verse 19). In Sakuntala Act I verse 22 he suggests that supreme beauty is semi-human and semi-divine and is the child of asceticism and divine loveliness and delight. Sakuntala is the daughter of Visvamitra and Menaka.

मानुषीषु कथं वा स्यादस्य रूपस्य संभवः ।
न प्रभातरलं ज्योतिरुदेति वसुधातलात् ॥

(How can there be such a manifestation of loveliness among mortals? A luminary aquiver with radiance does not spring up from the earth).

He refers to the elements of लावण्य (quivering splendour) and *rekha* (eye-rivetting charm) in Sakuntala Act VI verse 14. He points out also that beauty does not depend on external aid for its attractiveness.

सरसिजमनुविद्धं शैवलेनापि रम्यं
मलिनमपि हिमांशोर्लक्ष्म लक्ष्मीं तनोति ।
इयमधिकमनोज्ञा वल्कलेनाऽपि तन्वी
किमिव हि मधुराणां मण्डनं नाकृतीनाम् ॥

(A lotus flower is lovely though surrounded by moss. The dark spot in the moon makes for loveliness. Thus she, with her dress of bark, is all the more charming. What does not set off and decorate the loveliness of those who have the sweetness of beauty?)

He says further that jewels are as much decorated by beauty of person as they are decorators of such beauty.

अन्योन्यशोभाजननाद्बभूव साधारणो भूषणभूष्यभावः ।

(Kumarasambhava canto I verse 42)

In Vikramorvasiya he says in Act II verse 3 :

आभरणस्याभरणं प्रसाधनविधेर्‍ प्रसाधनविशेषः ।
उपमानस्यापि सखे प्रत्युपमानं वपुस्तस्याः ॥

(Her form is the ornament of her ornament and is the decorator of her decorations. Objects of similar beauty in creation should be compared to her higher beauty and not she to them).

It seems to me that the verse which expresses best the very essence of beauty and which is one of the greatest verses of Kalidasa is the famous 10th verse in Sakuntala Act II.

अनाघ्रातं पुष्पं किसलयमलूनं कररुहै-
रनाविद्धं रत्नं मधु नवमनास्वादितरसम् ।
अखण्डं पुण्यानां फलमिव च तद्रूपमनघं
न जाने भोक्तारं कमिह समुपस्थास्यति विधिः ॥

(Her faultless form is an unsmelt flower, a tender leaf unhandled by fingers, an unpierced gem, new and yet untasted honey, and the full fruit of virtuous and meritorious acts. I do not know whom the Creator has designed to enjoy it).

We find in this verse a crescendo of similitudes. The flower and the leaf are fair and fresh but very frail and evanescent. A gem has a lasting splendour. Sweet honey has an added element of attraction. The simile of the full fruit of goodness has a psychical element as well and shows that beauty has not only loveliness and softness and freshness and radiance and sweetness but is the gift of God to purity and goodness and devotion.

We find also in Kalidasa's works an assured conviction that beauty and baseness will not go together. In Act II of Sakuntala it is said :

न तादृशा आकृतिविशेषा गुणविरोधिनो भवन्ति ।

(Such nobility of appearance will not be opposed to nobility of soul). In Kumarasambhava canto V verse 36 the poet says:

यदुच्यते पार्वति पापवृत्तये
न रूपमित्यव्यभिचारि तद्वचः ।
तथा हि ते शीलमुदारदर्शने
तपस्विनाप्युपदेशतां गतम् ॥

(O Parvati, the saying that beauty will not walk in evil paths is perfectly true. O beautiful one, thy purity is a guide even to ascetics).

In the same spirit Shakespeare says in the *Tempest*:

"There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple".
(Act V scene 2)

Kalidasa is not content with delineating human beauty alone. He takes us step by step to higher and more glorious forms of beauty. In Sakuntala the radiant beauty of a child of a mortal and an immortal is delineated. In Meghasandesa he depicts the Yaksha (semi-divine) type of beauty. In Vikramorvasiya we are taken to the beauty of the world of gods (सुरलोकसुन्दरी) Act II verse 21. The beauty of incarnate Lakshmi is described in

Raghuvamsa. But it is in the Kumarasambhava that the poet has lavished all the resources of his wonderful art in delineating the supreme mother of the universe—the Goddess Uma who is the archetype of all loveliness and the presiding deity of every glory of body and of soul.

Such, according to the poet, is the nature of Beauty. He has described equally well the power of beauty over the human soul. In Raghuvamsa he sings in Canto VI about the mesmeric and fascinating beauty of Indumati and its effect on each of the assembled kings. In Kumarasambhava, canto I, verse 28, he says that supreme beauty is not only an adorner but is also a purifier of life just as a flame adorns and purifies a lamp and as the Ganges adorns and purifies the three worlds and as perfect speech adorns and purifies the speaker. The poet says also that the disappearance of beauty from our vision is the setting of our auspiciousness and the end of the joy of our heart and the closure of the gate of heroism.

भाग्यास्तमयमिवाक्ष्णोर्हृदयस्य महोत्सवावसानमिव ।
द्वारपिधानमिव धृतेर्मन्ये तस्यास्तिरस्करिणीम् ॥

(Malavikagnimitra Act II verse 11)

Kalidasa delights in describing the loveliness of girls and women. He has surpassed himself in describing the girlish loveliness and grace of Uma in canto I of Kumarasambhava. The verses describing Uma's beauty are too many to quote here but they begin with the wonderful verse:

उन्मीलितं तूलिकयेव चित्रं सूर्यांशुभिर्भिन्नमिवारविन्दम् ।
बभूव तस्याश्चतुरस्रशोभि वपुर्विभक्तं नवयौवनेन ॥
(Verse 32)

(Like a fine painting lit with colours by the brush and like the lotus opened by the rays of the sun her form was touched by dawning youth into all-round loveliness).

Innumerable are the verses of Kalidasa describing in a perfect way the beauty of women. Malavika during the dance and the *dohada* is described in memorable verses. In *Vikramorvasiya* Chitralekha herself says about Urvasi's loveliness: अपि नामाहमेव पुरूरवा भवेयमिति (I wish that I might myself be Pururavas), This recalls a famous stanza about the beauty of Draupadi. Sakuntala watering the trees is described in a perfect verse in Act I verse 26. The love-lorn Sakuntala is described

in an equally perfect verse in Act III, verse 7. The Yaksha's wife is described in a fine verse (verse 21) in the second part of Meghasandesa.

The handsome looks of boys and men also are vividly described by Kalidasa. He says that the tender palm of the boy Bharata was like a half-blown lotus flower blossoming at the touch of the young dawn.

अलक्ष्यपत्रान्तरमिद्धरागया
नवोषसा भिन्नमिवैकपङ्कजम् ॥

Prince Ayus also is finely described in Vikramorvasiya. The poet describes King Dilipa as having a broad breast, the neck of a bull, the height of a *sala* tree, and mighty arms (व्यूढोरस्को वृषस्कन्धः शालप्रांशुर्महाभुजः). Similarly Raghu is described thus: युवा युगव्यायतबाहुरंसलः कपाटवक्षाः परिणद्धकन्धरः (III, 34). Dushyanta is described in Sakuntala, Act II verse 4 as tall and slim and strong (Pranasara). But the poet, though he was comparatively reticent about the beauty of men, let himself go when he began to describe the great God Siva in his bridal form in the fifth canto of the Kumarasambhava. Even more wonderful is the description of God Siva in Kailasa

in the twelfth canto of the same poem. The beauty of old men in their glow of calm and benignity and spirituality is described in the delineations of Kanva and Maricha in Sakuntala and especially of the seven holy sages in canto VI of Kumarasambhava.

But the poet never regarded beauty by itself as the real culmination of life. A poet is naturally very sensitive to charm and loveliness and takes a keen delight in singing the attractiveness of beauty of face and form and figure. But Kalidasa knew well the real place of beauty in life and in super-life. If beauty fills us with reverence and delight and with a feeling of deep thankfulness to the Creator, if it inspires us to moods of heroism and self-sacrifice and service and chivalry, if it takes us out of dullness and deadness of heart and selfishness of spirit, if it quickens a mood of divine self-forgetfulness in us, if, in short, it releases the God within us—then it is an uplifting power. If, on the other hand, it increases our bondage to the senses, if it increases our earthiness, if it inflames our evil passions, if, in short, it releases the brute within us—then it is a degrading force. Kalidasa loved and glorified the uplifting type of beauty. He says in

canto VII verse 22 of Kumarasambhava that the fruit of feminine beauty and adornment is the joy of the husband's eyes. In showing the failure of Uma's beauty to captivate the heart of God Siva and the success of Uma's penance in achieving that end, Kalidasa has made us realise that beauty should lead to devotion and that devotion would lead to God.





CHAPTER VII.

Kalidasa as a Poet of Love.

KALIDASA'S poetry of Love is even more remarkable than his poetry of Nature or his poetry of Beauty. The poet says that the fulfilment of beauty is in love. (प्रियेषु सौभाग्यफला हि चारुता, Kumarasambhava, canto V verse, 1). The highest fulfilment of the human personality is in love; and a poet's title to the reverential love homage of the universal heart depends largely, if not exclusively, upon his treatment of the eternal and eternally interesting theme of love. Love is the stock-in-trade of all poets. But the ordinary poets merely give us rosewater showers of fine words such as spring and flower and beauty and passion and sweetness and bliss. It is only the great poets who have a true vision of the very heart of love and bring to us the most intimate essence of love's bliss and blessedness.

The problem of sex has always, next to the problem of the soul, been the most urgent and insistent and perplexing of problems. Men and women, being the descendants of men and women, have each a percentage of masculinity and feminineness in their natures. Each human being is thus in reality epicene in type. Do we not see the sublimation of this concept in the divine figure of Ardhanarisvara ? But the modern man—and for the matter of that the modern woman also,—do not know what is the true balance of the two elements in each human being. It is one of the lasting glories of the Hindu mind that it knew the secrets of the problem of sex as well as it knew the secrets of the problem of soul.

It has been found out by modern science that the sexual act is not one of the necessities of life. Dr. Mayer says: "No peculiar disease nor an abridgement of the duration of life can be ascribed to continence". Unrestrained sexual thought and appetite are the bane of civilised man. We do not meet with such a phenomenon in the animal kingdom. While the sexual pleasure is one of the deepest pleasures of the human system, it is not of

the essence of love but is a concomitant of love. It has been well said: "Sexual desire is primarily a mental state which it is within their power to control. The less thought that is given to it, the happier will be the marriage". In modern times over-sexuality has brought about pessimism in life and literature. Man must know how to curb his false sex-appetite of to-day and to become more chaste. The modern freedom of divorce and the still more modern heresy of companionate marriage are the rocks on which modern civilisation will split and go to pieces. The modern riot of sexual indulgence leads to loss of charm and magnetism and spirituality alike.

(Unless we realise these truths we can never understand Hindu Poetics. Till then the Hindu ideal of an unseverable union during life for the sake of a life beyond life and the Hindu gospel of regarding the husband as God would seem to me barbarous and to be due to the continuous domination of man over woman during the ages of universal history.) Till then the Hindu glorification of continence (*Brahmacharya*) and the Hindu rules about sexual intercourse would seem to be a delusion and a snare. (The Lord describes in the Gita that Brahmacharya is a physi-

cal tapas or austerity.) Is it not significant that the same word *Brahmacharya* signifies both sexual continence and true spirituality ? The ancient Hindu knew the inter-relations of vital force and mental force and spiritual force much better than the self-laudatory modern man. Love-force and sex-force are inter-linked but are not identical. In the animal kingdom we see sex-force but not love-force but the sex-force is regulated by instinct and rhythmical in its operation and periodicity. In man it is linked to love-force. But the higher element should not lead to the perversion of the lower element. It should preserve the values of the lower element and sublimate sex-force into soul-force. The Hindus knew and proclaimed that sensuality is not love. Their declaration that marriage is for begetting offspring is one mode of declaring this truth.

It is in the excitable and impressionable period of youth that young men and young women have to be guarded with care against sensuality. In a recent book on Sex-Force it is stated : "Physicians and others who are in a position to know accurately make the statement that ninety percent of all the girls who marry enter the wedded state impure,

especially in this country and in France; the percentage is not so high in England where young girls are still closely chaperoned". The Hindu doctrine of the so-called unfitness of women for independence has of course been misunderstood and misrepresented and reviled. It is well-known that Hindu women enjoyed in the past a very large measure of independence and even now enjoy a comparatively large measure of independence. There is no doubt that the circle of their liberty has to be widened having regard to the needs of modern life. But there is as much common sense as sentiment, as much reason as custom, in the ancient institutions of India which require a woman to be dependent on her father or her husband or her son. Such a rule of life safeguards purity and enkindles protective affection. What modern woman gains in liberty she loses in pure love and protective affection. Who can cast the figures of the soul and prepare a correct balance-sheet of inner loss and inner gain?

Thus in the true ideal of love, personal pleasure, and racial instinct, and mental affinity, and spiritual union are important and vital factors. I shall show presently how all these factors are stressed by our

immortal poet. Personal physical pleasure is a strong factor but is not at all the primary factor. There is in it, however refined it may be, an element of grossness and sensuality and even animality. The next higher sublimation of it is in the element of the perpetuation of the racial life. We owe everything to the past and we can never serve the past and repay the debt except by service to the incarnation of the past in the future. But even the propagation of the race is not the highest end of sex-life. The a-sexual propagation of life is known in the plant world. God surely intended the sex-life to subserve higher purposes as well. It leads to a higher vitality and magnetic power, and a more glorious life of the senses and the mind. It has been said well: "What really happens is that in this congenial companionship between two members of opposite sex, two poles, the positive and negative, are united forming a magnetic battery through which magnetic forces pour into both". The good and beautiful woman will unconsciously pull up her beloved into a higher region of sense-life and mind-life. The highest attainments in the fine arts have been due to the unconscious charm and loveliness and influence of woman. Last but not least is the upward leap

of the spiritual life due to the influence of love. A man under its influence becomes more kind to all, more unselfish, more reverential, and more full of devotion. The poet shows this most perfectly in Sakuntala. But let me not anticipate.

Even at the risk of appearing prurient, I wish to state that the vital energy of man has the sexual manifestation as only one of its many manifestations. Its higher use is to get absorbed in the system so as to increase a man's physical power and mental power and power of will by which alone he will be able to realise God in his heart. The sexual act should be regarded as a sacrament and should be indulged in according to the higher law. It has been said well : "Sexual union should take place only when there is a desire for a child and then it should occur only when there is complete unity of desire and should be so conducted as to express gentleness and delicacy". Dr. Nichols says : "It is a medical —a physiological—fact, that the best blood in the body goes to form the elements of reproduction in both sexes. In a pure and orderly life this matter is reabsorbed. It goes back into the circulation ready to form the finest brain, nerve and muscular tissue.

This life of man, carried back and diffused through the system, makes him manly, strong, brave, heroic. The suspension of the use of the generative organs is attended with a notable increase of bodily and mental vigor and spiritual life". In Kumarasambhava, III, 69, the glory of this self-control (वशित्व) is described in glowing terms. Once again let me not anticipate.

In short, modern selfishness and modern luxury and modern sex-mania form a trinity of demons. Hurry and competition and strain are due to selfishness. Liquor and drugs and spiced and seasoned viands are due to luxury. I do not narrate the effects of sex-mania in detail as the list would be appalling and long but every one can draw it up easily enough. It seems to me that a study of Kalidasa's ideals of love will be a powerful force making for the attainment of sanity and sweetness and spirituality by modern love.

The love poetry of each race is the truest test of its innate refinement. Judged by this test the Indian people occupy a very high place. According to Indian thought, the senses are called *devas* or the pure and shining ones. It is the mind that can rise

the heights of purity or sink to the depths of impurity. It is in relation to sex that the mind attains to lofty heights of purity or sinks to low depths of impurity. The Hindus knew well that the joy of sex-life is enhanced by the unobtrusion of the sex-idea. (They were as much experts in *Artha Sastra* (science of wealth) and *Kama Sastra* (science of enjoyment) as in *Dharma Sastra* (science of conduct) and *Moksha Sastra* (science of religion). They knew that the love-emotion during the separation of lovers has a higher purity and spiritual value than even the love-emotion during the union of lovers.) They knew, in short, all the subtle shades of the emotion of love and its physical manifestations and spiritual reactions. That is why Hindu love-poetry is so exquisite and chaste and pure. Though perhaps it does not rise to the heights occasionally reached in the West in delineating the transfiguration of the world during the romance of first love, it has greater depth and amplitude and subtlety and vision. Among the poets of love in India, Kalidasa occupies the throne of supremacy by the acclamation of all.

I shall first deal with Kalidasa's ideals of love

and with his description of the general aspects of love and of the special and particular aspects of love. Speaking about his ideals of love, it is noteworthy that he always proclaims that love (Kama) should never override *Dharma*. In canto III verse 6 of *Kumarasambhava* Cupid asks Indra whether he should overwhelm the artha (wealth) and dharma (rightousness) of any person.

(कस्यार्थधर्मौ वद पीडयामि सिन्धोस्तटावोघ इव प्रवृद्धः ॥)

Such a Cupid was reduced to ashes by God Siva. It was only after Parvati's penance won where her beauty failed that the Lord revived Cupid in response to the prayers of the Gods.

Kalidasa has clearly taught that love is the result of ante natal union. In a famous verse in *Sakuntala* —which is one of the most beautiful verses in all literature—he says :

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान्
पर्युत्सुकी भवति यत्सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।
तच्चेतसा स्मरति नूनमबोधपूर्वं
भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौहृदानि ॥

(Act V verse 2)

(The reason why even a happy man, when he sees beautiful things or hears harmonious sounds, becomes full of a vague melancholy is that his antenatal companionships rooted in his emotional nature are remembered by him without their rising to the surface of his consciousness).

The same idea is well expressed in Rossetti's well-known sonnett :

"O born with me somewhere that men forget
And though in years of sight and sound unmet
Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough".

Kalidasa expressly says in Raghuvamsa, VII, 15: मनो हि जन्मान्तरसंगतिज्ञं (the mind knows the attachments of former lives). In a famous stanza in Raghuvamsa, (XIV, 66), Sita says that she will practise penances so that she may attain Rama again as her beloved but without any possibility of the pain of separation.

साहं तपः सूर्यनिविष्टदृष्टिरूर्ध्वं प्रसूतेश्चरितुं यतिष्ये ।
भूयो यथा मे जननान्तरेऽपि त्वमेव भर्ता न च विप्रयोगः ॥

Kalidasa has taught also that it is the element of pure emotion that is of value in love and that the

element of physical union is a merely subsidiary and subordinated element. Indian writers on Erotics and Æsthetics never stressed sexual pleasure as the be-all and the end-all of love. They knew that absence maketh the heart grow fonder and that the passion of love shines better in separation (*Vipralambha sringara*) than in union (*Sambhoga sringara*). Kalidasa expressly says in Malavikagnimitra Act III, verse 15.

> अनातुरोत्कण्ठितयोः प्रसिद्ध्यता
> समागमेनापि रतिर्न मां प्रति ।
> परस्परप्राप्तिनिराशयोर्वरं
> शरीरनाशोऽपि समानुरागयोः ॥

(I am not enamoured of the union between the loveless and the passionate. Far better is the death of two equally passionate lovers who have no hope of mutual attainment at all).

Kalidasa shows also how equally important in love is the duty of handing on the torch of life to the generations to come. Having received the gift of life and culture from our forefathers, we can discharge our debt (ऋण) to them only by handing on the heritage—undiminished and if possible aug-

mented—to those who are to be our successors and theirs as well. That is why he says in Raghuvamsa, Canto I, that the kings of the solar race entered upon the married state for the sake of offspring. In *Sakuntala* the king mourns that his ancestors would be grief-stricken at the failure of the line. Such an attitude towards love is not due to any inherent joylessness but is due to a perception of the higher and nobler and larger aspects of love in preference to its narrow and personal aspects.

Kalidasa proclaimed in thrilling tones the joy-element in love. None has sung about love's bliss in more glad or eloquent or convincing terms. The sudden investment of the world with a new radiance and a new sweetness when the lamp of love is lighted in the heart is repeatedly described by him in his poems and plays. In Meghasandesa (II, 22), the Yaksha refers to his beloved wife as his second life. In Vikramorvasiya Act III verse 19 king Pururavas declares that the sovereignty of the world is not so sweet as service unto his beloved. In the description of Uma and Siva, of Aja and Indumati, and of other ideal lovers, the poet is never tired of describing the access of joy that comes

to the heart with the dawn of love, Nay in Kumarasambhava, V, 95 the poet says that even God Siva was full of the impatient delight of love and asks : "If the desires of love can touch and affect even God, will they not overwhelm ordinary men ?"

Proceeding now to deal with Kalidasa's description of the general aspects of love, he points out how the world is dark to love denied and bright to love triumphant. In Vikramorvasiya Act III verses 20 to 22, he says that the same lunar rays and Cupid's arrows which were a source of agony to the unhappy lover, are a source of joy to the happy lover, that the joy of love granted after the pain of love denied is doubly pleasurable because sweet is pleasure after pain just as the shade of trees is sweeter to the sunburnt man, and that the lover would rejoice if during union the nights would be as long as they seemed during separation. The humility of true love is well expressed in Raghuvamsa, VIII, 49. There Aja laments that he must have been a false lover because his beloved left him for the world without any previous warning whatever. The poet says further that lovers look at

everything through the eye of love and in relation to their love's happiness or unhappiness (कामी स्वतां पश्यति. Sakuntala, II, 2, See also Malavikagnimitra, III, 10).

A special feature which has to be noticed in regard to Kalidasa's love-poetry is that he has described often the later love of men but always the first and only love of women. It almost looks as if he was of opinion that man's tenderness in love is a later growth while woman's tenderness in love is instinctive, innate, and natural. But the later love of the good man is in its way as true and tender and deep as the early and only love of woman. In the description of Uma's penance and bridal bliss, he hints also that the passion of love which springs up in the pure soul of a woman trained in ways of austerity and renunciation is the sweetest and noblest and highest thing in life.

It is also worthy of notice that the poet utters a note of warning against giving the rein to sexual passion under the sway of a youthful and beautiful face. In Sakuntala, V, 24, he makes Sarngarava say:

अतः परीक्ष्य कर्तव्यं विशेषात्संगतं रहः ।
अज्ञातहृदयेष्वेवं वैरीभवति सौहृदम् ॥

(Hence secret union should be the result of deliberation. The affection born in hearts whose true nature is not tested and known turns into hate).

In Sakuntala we see also how the play begins in hunt and ends in peace. The hunt of love is a delight but mere physical rapture leads often to trouble and has to be spiritualised into the abiding peace of emotional tenderness. In the story about Ūrvasi's going away on seeing her son and about Indra's grace resulting in her stay in her husband's home along with their son, the poet makes us feel that very often the brief romance of physical passion and pleasure vanishes after the birth of a child and that the best gift of Providence as the result of our own self-restraint and self-purification is the gift of that higher and holier love which is in right relation to the past and the present and the future and which finds in love a fulfilment of life in all its variety of a nexus of obligations. In *Vikramorvasiya* the poet tells us also how Urvasi is won back by the touch of the gem which was born from the Goddess Gouri's feet and thus tells us by a beautiful symbol that even the ecstacy of first love has to be rewon and recaptured in a higher and a holier mood

if it is to be not a brief conflagration of joy but a steady glow of bliss.

I shall refer in a later chapter to love in its domestic aspect when I deal with Kalidasa's ideals of womanhood. It may, however, be mentioned here that the truest love bases itself on *dharma* and is rewarded with the highest bliss. In Kumarasambhava, V, 38, God Siva tells Parvati that *dharma* seems to him to be the essence of *Trivarga* (*dharma and artha and kama*), because she took her stand on *dharma* alone and sought it without caring for wealth or pleasure :

अनेन धर्मः सविशेषमद्य मे
त्रिवर्गसारः प्रतिभाति भामिनि ।
त्वया मनोनिर्विषयार्थकामया
यदेक एव प्रतिगृह्य सेव्यते ॥

Kalidasa thus emphasises the moral and spiritual aspects of love. He says about Arundhati that she appeared to be the incarnate fulfilment and fruit of husband's penance. (Kumarasambhava, VI, 11). He says also that faithful wives are the fundamental cause of all righteous acts and duties.

(क्रियाणां खलु धर्म्याणां सत्पत्न्यो मूलकारणम् ।) In the same verse he says about Arundhati that when God Siva saw her he desired to marry a pure and noble women because the love of a pure and holy and loving woman is the fulfilment of life (तद्दर्शनादभूच्छंभोर्भूयान्दारार्थमादरः— Kumarasambhava, VI, 13).

I shall now proceed to describe briefly the poet's description of special and particular aspects of love. In Malavikagnimitra, II, 2 and Sakuntala, III, 3, we have the usual conventional inveighment against the moon and against Cupid. More interesting are Kalidasa's observations about the peculiarities of the emotion of love. He says that true love is scornful of scandal.

ममात्र भावैकरसं मनःस्थितं न कामवृत्तिर्वचनीयमीक्षते ।
(Kumarasambhava, V, 82).

He points out also that when love is obstructed, it, like an obstructed river, chafes but pursues its course (Vikramorvasiya, III, 8).

The poet says further that the first response of a woman in love is not by words but by physical manifestations.

स्त्रीणामाद्यं प्रणयवचनं विभ्रमो हि प्रियेषु ॥

(Meghasandesa, I, 28).

His special greatness is his perfect and minute observation and deleniation of such physical manifestations of love. He describes the growth of love in Malavikagnimitra, IV, 1. Agnimitra says there that the tree of love had its root in hearing about the beloved's beauty, that it put forth its tender leaf of passion when she was seen, and that it had its buds when his hairs stood on end thrilled by bliss at her touch and asks when he could taste the fruit of delight on the tree of love. He says in Act III, verse 1, that the body may become thin as the joy of embrace is denied and the eyes may be full of tears as she could not be seen and asks why there should be grief in the heart because it is never separated from her even for a moment.

The poet notes the difference between the physical manifestations of new love and love perfected by time. In Malavikagnimitra, IV, 8 he says that the woman full of new-born love desires to see well her lover's form but is too shy to do so.

कुतूहलवानपि निसर्गशालीनः स्त्रीजनः ।

In Raghuvaṃsa, IX, 34 he says that her words are few because of her bashfulness (प्रविरला इव मुग्धवधू-कथाः). Uma is described in Kumarasambhava, III, 68, as standing before God Siva with shy and half-turned face and bashful looks expressing her love silently by her thrilled and eloquent frame. See also Raghuvamsa, VI, 81. A beautiful verse in Raghuvamsa (VII, 23) describes this shy struggle of young lovers to have a full view of each other.

तयोरपाङ्गप्रतिसारितानि
क्रियासमापत्तिनिवर्तितानि ।
ह्रीयन्त्रणामानशिरे मनोज्ञा-
मन्योन्यलोलानि विलोचनानि ॥

But the most perfect expression of such shy manifestations of love is in Sakuntala : (I, 20, 27; II. 2, 11, 12,). I shall select for special mention here some of these beautiful stanzas :

वाचं न मिश्रयति यद्यपि मद्वचोभिः
कर्णं ददात्यभिमुखं मयि भाषमाणे ।
कामं न तिष्ठति मदाननसंमुखी सा
भूयिष्ठमन्यविषया न तु दृष्टिरस्याः ॥

(She does not mingle her words with mine but she lends her ears when I speak. She never faces me but her looks are never away from me).

अभिमुखे मयि संहृतमीक्षणं
हसितमन्यनिमित्तकृतोदयम् ।
विनयवारितवृत्तिरितस्तया
न विवृतो मदनो न च संवृतः ॥

दर्भाङ्कुरेण चरणः क्षत इत्यकाण्डे
तन्वी स्थिता कतिचिदेव पदानि गत्वा ।
आसीद्विवृत्तवदना च विमोचयन्ती
शाखासु वल्कलमसक्तमपि द्रुमाणाम् ॥

(When I am in front of her, her gaze is withdrawn. She smiles with delight as if she smiles at something else. Her love, checked by her (bashfulness), was neither revealed nor concealed). She stays a while, saying that a grass pricked her foot, so that she may have a farewell love-look at her lover; she pauses to release her uncaught garment from the branches of the tree so that she may gaze once more. The most beautiful of all these stanzas is perhaps that describing Sakuntala writing her love-letter :

उन्नमितैकभ्रूलतमाननमस्याः पदानि रचयन्त्याः ।
कण्टकितेन प्रथयति मय्यनुरागं कपोलेन ॥

(Act III, verse 12)

The yearning and steady love-look of the woman whose love has been tested and perfected by time is thus described by the poet :

पपौ निमेषालसपक्ष्मपङ्क्तिरुपोषिताभ्यामिव लोचनाभ्याम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, II, 19)

(She drank her husband's returning form with unwinking eyes which seemed to be famished and hungry for such sight of her beloved).

The poet describes equally well the physical manifestations of love in men during the first gaze of love, during marriage, and during later life. The thrilling of the body at the first touch of the beloved is described in Vikramorvasiya, I, 13, Raghuvamsa, VII, 22, and Kumarasambhava VII, 77. He describes minutely the physical manifestations of desire (*Sringara cheshtah*) in the assembled princes when Indumati entered the hall of nuptial choice.

The poet describes also various other special aspects of love. Love's dream is described in

Kumarasambhava, V, 57, and Malavikagnimitra IV, 11. Equally well are described love's moods of day-dream and reverie and longing in Vikramorvasiya, III, 15, and Act VI of Sakuntala. He is an expert also in describing the messengers of love and other elements of emotional value in relation to the feeling of love as described in Indian Kama Sastra (Erotics).

The highest ideal of love is described by Kalidasa in relation to Uma. All human love approximates to divine love to the extent to which it aims at that noble ideal of beauty attaining bliss through love perfected by penance. The poet says that Uma's love rounded to full-orbed glory and attained the perfection of winning one half of her lord's form as her own.

करेण भानोर्बहुलावसाने संधुक्ष्यमाणेव शशाङ्करेखा ।
(Kumarasambhava, VII, 8)

समादिदेशैकवधूं भवित्रीं प्रेम्णा शरीरार्धहरां हरस्य ॥
(Do, I, 50)





CHAPTER VIII.

Kalidasa's Ideals of Boyhood and Education and Manhood.

IN the natural course of the ascent of thought in this work we now arrive at Kalidasa's ideals of boyhood and manhood. The world is kept young and sweet and noble and spiritual and God-ward by the children as by the flowers in the earth and the stars in the sky. In the pageant of life glorified which we find in Kalidasa's pages, the boys occupy a noble and prominent place.

No other poet has depicted with such truth and tenderness the natural affection which a loving father feels for his children. He says in Kumarasambhava, XI, 17, about Uma's feeling when she saw Kumara : पुत्रोत्सवे माद्यति का न हर्षात् (who does not feel the very madness of ecstacy at the birth of a son ?). He says further that she was unable to see

her son as she was blinded by tears of joy but that she felt him with her hands and experienced an unspeakable and ambrosial delight.

प्रमोदबाष्पाकुललोचना सा न तं ददर्श क्षणमग्रतोऽपि ।
परिस्पृशन्ती करकुड्मलेन सुखान्तरं प्राप किमप्यपूर्वम् ॥
(Kumarasambhava, XI, 18).

In the same terms he describes the feeling of the mothers of Rama and Lakshmana for them.

विस्पष्टमस्रान्धतया न दृष्टौ ज्ञातौ सुतस्पर्शसुखोपलम्भात् ।
(Raghuvamsa, XIV, 2).

In the very same terms he describes Dilipa's love for Raghu.

तमङ्कमारोप्य शरीरयोगजैः
सुखैर्निषिञ्चन्तमिवामृतं त्वचि ।
उपान्तसंमीलितलोचनो नृप-
श्चिरात्सुतस्पर्शरसज्ञतां ययौ ॥ (Do, III, 25).

Pururavas says about Prince Ayus that on seeing him his eyes filled with tears of joy and his heart was full of yearning love and his mind was full of a tranquil bliss and that he yearned with a quivering frame to hug and fold the boy in a close embrace.

बाष्पायते निपतिता मम दृष्टिरस्मि-
न्वात्सल्यबन्धि हृदयं मनसः प्रसादः ।
संजातवेपथुभिरुज्झितधैर्यवृत्ति
रिच्छामि चैनमदयं परिरब्धुमङ्गैः ॥

सर्वाङ्गीणः स्पर्शः सुतस्य किल तेन मामुपनतेन ।
आह्लादयस्व तावच्चन्द्रकरश्चन्द्रकान्तमिव ॥

(Vikramorvasiya, V, 9 and 11)

Equally lovely is the description in Sakuntala Act VII, verse 19. In verse 17, Dushyanta says that lucky are those who have on them the dust on the persons of their children whose causeless smiles disclose their pearling teeth and who lisp sweetly and climb into the laps of their fathers.

आलक्ष्यदन्तमुकुलाननिमित्तहासै-
रव्यक्तवर्णरमणीयवचःप्रवृत्तीन् ।
अङ्काश्रयप्रणयिनस्तनयान्वहन्तो
धन्यास्तदङ्गरजसा मलिनीभवन्ति ॥

Equally fine is the description of the love which Prince Avus feels for his father.

यदि हार्दमिदं श्रुत्वा पिता ममायं सुतोऽहमस्येति ।
तत्सङ्के वृद्धानां गुरुषु भवेत्कीदृशी स्नेहः ॥

(Vikramorvasiya, V, 10)

In Raghuvamsa, XVIII, 11 the poet says that obedience is of the essence of filial affection and that longing is of the essence of paternal affection.

पिता समाराधनतत्परेण पुत्रेण पुत्री स यथैव तेन ।
पुत्रस्तथैवात्मजवत्सलेन स तेन पित्रा पितृमान् बभूव ॥

The boys described in Kalidasa's works are of a winsome and attractive type. Rama as a boy is described with enthusiasm in Raghuvamsa. The poet says about him तेजसां हि न वयः समीक्ष्यते (in the case of great and heroic souls, youth is not counted at all—Raghuvamsa, XI, 1). Kusa, Lava, Ayus, Bharata, and Kumara form a wonderful galaxy. They are handsome, gifted, heroic of soul, full of reverence to elders, and experts in self-control. Bharata was well called *Sarvadamana* (the tamer of all). Bharata, hugging a lion's cub in sport and beating the cub's mother despite its snarling, is a fine subject for a painter and has been beautifully painted by Ravivarma. There is a great deal of

suggestiveness in Kalidasa's description of Bharata as conceived in a hermitage and as brought up in heaven. He suggests thereby that only boys born of self-control and trained in purity are fit to be the rulers of Indra's sacred land which has derived its name from Bharata. Such children alone will be the glory of the family and of the nation. In Malavikagnimitra Act V Queen Dharini is praised as being a *Veerasooh* (the mother of a hero). The poet in describing the boyhood and youth of Raghu idealises the youth of India.

Kalidasa gives us also noble ideas about the methods and ideals of education. He points out that he is the best teacher who has both learning and power of instruction.

शिष्टा क्रिया कस्य चिदात्मसंस्था
संक्रान्तिरन्यस्य विशेषयुक्ता ।
यस्योभयं साधु स शिक्षकाणां
धुरि प्रतिष्ठापयितव्य एव ॥

(Malavikagnimitra, I, 16).

In fact it is by teaching that learnt knowledge becomes one's own and one becomes an expert in it

(सुशिक्षितोऽपि सर्वः उपदेशेन निष्णातो भवति)—Malavikagnimitra, Act I). When a teacher has a clever pupil, the latter so quickly learns what is taught and improves upon it that it seems as if the learner teaches the teacher in his turn, and the imparted instruction becomes a thing of beauty, like the drop of rain water in an oyster becoming a pearl of great price.

यद्यत्प्रयोगविषये भाविकमुपदिश्यते मया तस्यै ।
तत्तद्विशेषकरणात् प्रत्युपदिशतीव मे बाला ॥

पात्रविशेषे न्यस्तं गुणान्तरं व्रजति शिल्पमाधातुः ।
जलमिव समुद्रशुक्तौ मुक्ताफलतां पयोदस्य ॥

(Malavikagnimitra, I, 5, 6)

क्रिया हि वस्तूपहिता प्रसीदति ।

(Raghuvamsa, III, 29)

The test of a sound education is its power to stand the test of competent judges. Life is the test tube of education.

उपदेशं विदुः शुद्धं सन्तस्तमुपदेशिनः ।
श्यामायते न युष्मासु यः काञ्चनमिवाग्निषु ॥

(Do, II, 9)

The poet teaches also that children's minds are not a mere *tabula rosa* and that they come into the world with inclinations and aptitudes and powers and gifts and graces acquired in previous births. He says about Uma :

तां हंसमालाः शरदीव गङ्गां
महौषधिं नक्तमिवात्मभासः ।
स्थिरोपदेशामुपदेशकाले
प्रपेदिरे प्राक्तनजन्मविद्याः ॥

(Kumarasambhava, I, 30)

(To her, who acquired knowledge with wonderful grasp and assimilative power, the aspects of knowledge acquired in previous births came voluntarily, just as the rows of suns haunt the Ganga in autmn and the inherent luminous glows of creepers return to them during the night).

The student should never question the authority of the teacher or the propriety of his commands (आज्ञा गुरूणां ह्यविचारणीया Raghuvamsa, XIV, 46). The poet emphasises again and again the importance of study and *Brahmacharya*. He says about the kings of the solar race that they learnt all aspects of

knowledge in their youth (शैशवेऽभ्यस्तविद्यानां—Raghuvamsa, canto I verse 8;—ततार विद्याः—Raghuvamsa, III, 30). The acquired knowledge should be clarified and perfected by converting precept into practice, (विद्यामभ्यसनेनैव प्रसादयितुमर्हसि —Raghuvamsa. I. 88).

The true aim and ideal and value of education are stated by Kalidasa to be the purification as well as the ornamentation of life. He says that Himavan was purified and adorned by Parvati's birth just as a lamp is by the flame or the three worlds are by the Ganga or a learned man is by perfect speech.

प्रभामहत्या शिखयेव दीप-
स्त्रिमार्गयेव त्रिदिवस्य मार्गः ।
संस्कारवत्येव गिरा मनीषी
तया स पूतश्च विभूषितश्च ॥

(Kumarasambhava, I, 28)

The true aim of education is thus not mere preparation for livelihood or social life or even citizenship—great as these ideals are—but the preparation for a rich and full and pure life by which alone man is led from the unreal unto the real and from darkness unto light and from death unto immortality (असतो

मा सद्गमय तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय and विद्यया-ऽमृतमश्नुते--to use the language of the Upanishads).

The poet teaches that only such youth who are trained by such ideals of education can attain and realise the highest ideals of manhood and maintain and perfect and transmit the loftiest ideals of Indian life. As I am describing in detail in a later chapter Kalidasa's ideals of life, I shall refer here only to a few general features. The heroism of true manhood is shown not only on the battlefield and amidst the clash of arms but also during a hundred occasions of seeming triviality in daily life. "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." Daily and ordinary life has her heroisms no less renowned than an international war on a colossal scale. Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*

"Is the generous spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought :
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright,

....

Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness like a man inspired".

In the same tune sings Kalidasa :

व्यूढोरस्को वृषस्कन्धः सालप्रांशुर्महाभुजः ।
आत्मकर्मक्षमं देहं भावो धर्म इवाश्रितः ॥

आकारसदृशप्रज्ञः प्रज्ञया सदृशागमः ।
आगमैः सदृशारम्भः आरम्भसदृशोदयः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 13, 15)

(Broad of chest, bull-necked, tall as the sala tree, and mighty of arm, Dilipa looked as if he were the kshatriya or protective genius incarnate in a form fit for the high duties of life. His wisdom was in harmony with his personal charm ; his learning was in harmony with his wisdom ; his endeavours were in harmony with his learning ; and his achievements were proportionate to his high endeavours). In Dilipa, in Raghu, and especially in Sri Rama, and

in a minor degree in the kings in his plays the poet has given to us fine ideals of manly life.

In describing Dushyanta in *Sakuntala* the poet hints and suggests that a pure and noble and passionate love glorifies and uplifts a man's entire nature and fires him with the loftiest ambitions and ideals. Till Dushyanta met *Sakuntala* he was an ordinary monarch. But his pure love for her revealed him to himself and to others in a new light. He felt and said that his mind was *Arya* (noble) and that men of pure nature have their ways in life made clear for them by an inner light. After his love is tested in the fire of sorrow, his pure and noble affection for his pure and noble wife has increased his fund of compassion and affection for all. He feels in him the surge of a new protective tenderness and has it announced by beat of drum that all who lost their nearest and dearest could turn to him as their friend and kinsman. The poet represents the king as becoming, after his great and holy love, not only fit for discharging the highest tasks and duties of life but also fit for the companionship of sages and gods and destined to be the father of the ruler of the world.

In the case of true manhood, love is thus a purifying and ennobling and uplifting force. Kalidasa is never weary of emphasising further that love if it is to ennoble and divinise the nature of man should never be free or licentious or illicit love. He has no innocent adulteries or grand improper and illicit passions in his poems and plays. He says in Raghuvamsa XVI, 8: वशिनां रघूणां मनः परस्त्रीविमुखप्रवृत्तिः । (the minds of the self-controlled kings of Raghu's line naturally turn away from the wives of others). Dushyanta, when he cannot recall to his mind that he had wooed and won the fair Sakuntala, resolutely withdraws his attracted gaze from her face, saying अनिर्वर्णनीयं परकलत्रं (the wife of another should not be gazed at).

He says further:

कुमुदान्येव शशाङ्कः सविता बोधयति पङ्कजान्येव ।
वशिनां हि परपरिग्रहसंश्लेषपराङ्मुखी वृत्तिः ॥

(Sakuntala, V, 28)

(The moon makes the lilies blossom and the sun the lotus flowers. The minds of men of self-control turn away from the love of the wives of others).

God Siva in his Brahmachari form is described as in Kumarasambhava, V, 32, as looking at her with straight and unlonging looks (ऋजुनैव चक्षुषा) when he had to speak to her. In all his works the poet insists on the fact that it is only pure and self-restrained and noble and moral and spiritualised love that is capable of rousing all the latent energies and potencies of the soul and enabling a man to achieve the salvation of his country and his people and also of his own individual soul by fitting it for divine communion.

The poet describes with enthusiasm the readiness of true manhood to take up all the manifold tasks of life in the right spirit and discharge the complex duties of life in an adequate measure. Throughout his works he shows how true manhood is ever ready to fling away life as a sacrifice if the call of the country or its religion is to that effect. In describing Sri Rama the poet idealises true manhood and shows how it is full of equipoise and readiness and a sacrificial and consecrated spirit.

Such a manhood grows stronger and sweeter in spirit as it passes into old age. Kalidasa's old men are among the most attractive of his creations.

Raghu in his old age and Kanva in his hermitage are described with evident love and reverence and enthusiasm. They are not sour or dour but are full of a ripe and mellow sweetness of spirit and a calm and balanced tenderness and compassion for all. Nay, the poet says that the truest manhood is that which is consecrated to the highest culture in youth and devoted to the loftiest duties and delights of life in manhood and is full of the spirit of meditation and renunciation in old age and is capable of giving up the body by Yoga.

शैशवेऽभ्यस्तविद्यानां यौवने विषयैषिणाम् ।
वार्धके मुनिवृत्तीनां योगेनान्ते तनुत्यजाम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 8)

In the appreciation of poetry and painting and music and architecture and sculpture the angle of vision is of supreme importance. I have long felt that, though in Sakuntala the *sringara rasa* (the love-emotion) occupies a high place, the poet with that subtle suggestiveness in which he is an acknowledged expert makes us feel that he is giving us an epic of Indian heroism as a subdued and secondary note and that the play is a glorification of *Vira rasa*

as well. I shall recur to this feature from another point of view in my chapter on Kalidasa's portraiture of Indian civilisation. The poet introduces into the play prophecies of Bharata's coming and predictions of Bharata's glory. The hermits bless Dushyanta by saying that he should have a son who would be a great protector and rule the earth (पुत्रमेवंगुणोपेतं चक्रवर्तिनमाप्नुहि). The sage Kanva blesses Ṣakuntala by saying that her son was to be without a rival (apratiratha). When the boy is brought on the scene, he is described as handsome and brave and full of love and reverence. Nay, he is given the name of *Sarvadamana* (the tamer of all). The sage Maricha prophecies that he shall be called Bharata as he shall protect the world (लोकस्य भरणात्). It is most fitting that such an ideal boy so born and trained and so full of the spirit of heroism and conquest (including the heroism of self-conquest) should give his name to the ideal land.





CHAPTER IX.

Kalidasa's Ideals of Girlhood and Education and Womanhood.

THE poet's delineation of girlhood and womanhood is as charming and true as his description of boyhood and manhood. Indeed one can go further and say that his insight into the woman's mind and heart and soul is even truer and more intimate and vivid than his insight into the nature of man. None of the poets of India—excluding of course Valmiki in his portraiture of Sita—has excelled Kalidasa in the presentation of true and real and yet idealised pictures of the highest aspects and graces of Indian womanhood.

Kalidasa's most loving idealisation of girlhood is found in his description of Uma in Kumarasambhava. It is even more attractive and charming than his fine sketches of boyhood. He says that her father's attachment to her was even greater

than his attachment to his son, and that he was purified and adorned by her birth. The poet describes her girlish games and sports (*Bala Lila* or Kreeda Rasa). His description of the growing grace and loveliness of Uma is one of the finest things in literature. Thus the poet's idealisation of Uma shows the hollowness of the charge that the Hindus dislike the birth of girls. The preference for boys is due to ceremonial and spiritual considerations. But the call of the heart for a beautiful and graceful and gracious female child was felt by the Hindus at least as much as by other races in the world. In fact there enters into their love for girls a finer and more intensive tenderness, because the girl is but a brief light in the family and must be taken away soon to light another home when she becomes most loving and lovable and capable of service and tenderness. The famous verses in Act IV of Sakuntala speak far themselves :

यास्यत्यद्य शकुन्तलेति हृदयं संस्पृष्टमुत्कण्ठया
कण्ठः स्तम्भितबाष्पवृत्तिकलुषश्चिन्ताजडं दर्शनम् ।
वैक्लव्यं मम तावदीदृशमहो स्नेहादरण्यौकसः
पीड्यन्ते गृहिणः कथं नु तनयाविश्लेषदुःखैर्नवैः ॥

(Knowing that Sakuntala shall leave to-day my heart is full of yearning. My throat feels gripped by unshed tears, and my eyes are bereft of the power of seeing owing to my agitation of mind. Such is the trepidation of myself, a forest-dweller, as the result of affection; how much must dwellers in homes be affected by the pain caused by their new separation from their daughters?)

अर्थो हि कन्या परकीय एव
तामद्य संप्रेष्य परिग्रहीतुः ।
जातो ममायं विशदः प्रकामं
प्रत्यर्पितन्यास इवान्तरात्मा ॥

(A female child is property belonging to another. Having sent her to her husband, my mind has become calm and clear like that of a man who has returned to the owner what was given to him as deposit for safe custody).

Thus the two elements of *Utkantha* (longing and *Nyasa* (deposit) have united to make the relation of the parent to the daughter a relation of peculiar delicacy and beauty and spirituality and enderness and sweetness in India.

The education of girls to fit them to become incarnations of the Indian genius and the mothers of the India of the future is not left untouched by the poet. When describing Uma's education the poet describes that the faculties and sciences of which she was the mistress in the previous incarnation sought her and shone in her in the next incarnation (Kumarasambhava, I, 30). Even the forest-maiden Sakuntala was literate and was an expert in the discharge of household duties and in the excellences of courtesy. Nay, she could when there was no other help defend herself with spirit in a public assembly against unfounded aspersions. She was trained so well that she was undepressed by sorrow and unelated by joy. The Yaksha's wife is described in *Meghasandesa* as being dowered with many graces of mind as well as of body. She was an expert in the fine arts of painting and poetry and music. She had household pets which were delicately and fondly reared by her. In describing Malavika's education the poet describes in Malavikagnimitra how she became quickly such an expert in song and dance that her teacher felt that she taught him by her assimilation of the teaching and her improvement of it as much as she was taught by him.

तत्तद्विशेषकरणात्प्रत्युपदिशतीव मे बाला ।

She acquired what the poet calls in Act II verse 13 as Lalita Vijnana (beautiful arts). The poet says also that women have not only a quick assimilative power but have also an intuitive power of discernment निसर्गनिपुणाः स्त्रियः—(Malavikagnimitra Act II).

Kalidasa says that marriage and motherhood are not only the obligations of woman-hood but are also the privileges and graces and sanctities of womanhood. When a girl is given in marriage to a worthy husband, she becomes the light of another home and a source of new life and joy, without ceasing to be the light of the home of her birth and the source of joy there.

अशोच्या हि पितुः कन्या सद्भर्तृप्रतिपादिता ।

(Kumarasambhava, VI, 79).

In verses 85, 86 and 88 of canto VI of the same great poem, the poet says that in matrimonial matters men look through the eyes of their wives and that women dictate only the desires of their husbands, and that a girl is given by God to be given as a love-offering (Bhiksha) to her predestined lord.

Kalidasa has taught again and again that such

marriage conceived in such a sanctified spirit is not at all a hindrance to the culture of the soul but is on the other hand a help in psychic evolution. In Kumarasambhava, I, 18 he describes Mena, the bride of Himavan, as one worthy of reverence even by saints. He says in Kumarasambhava, VI, 12, that reverence is due to character and not to sex स्त्रीपुमा-नित्यनास्थैषा वृत्तं हि महितं सतां । In Kumarasambhava, V, 16, he says that the greatest sages and ascetics went to see Parvati in penance because youth is not an element to be borne in mind when it goes along with maturity in wisdom and righteousness (*dharma*).

कृताभिषेकां हुतजातवेदसं
त्वगुत्तरासंगवतीमधीतिनीम् ।
दिदृक्षवस्तामृषयोऽभ्युपागम-
न्न धर्मवृद्धेषु वयः समीक्ष्यते ॥

In all his works he describes how by a pure wedded love men and women rise to higher planes of soul-life and become fitter and fitter for universal love and divine communion.

The poet is at his happiest in describing conjugal love and its duties and privileges and joys.

He points out in his delineation of Sita's character how noble women regard their husbands as their gods (Pati-devata ; Raghuvamsa, XIV, 74). He says that when Rama started to go to the forest, Sita stepped before him as if she were his propitious goddess of prosperity (लक्ष्मीरिव गुणोन्मुखी-Raghuvamsa, XII, 26). While emphasising the husband's full power over the wife (उपपन्ना हि दारेषु प्रभुता सर्वतोमुखी-Sakuntala VI, 26) and saying that the wife if rejected should stay in her husband's house as his slave (Sakuntala, VI, 26), he clearly affirms that the true-hearted wife is the household deity and the minister and the comrade, and the beloved disciple of the husband in the domain of the fine arts.

गृहिणी सचिवः सखी मिथः प्रियशिष्या ललिते कलाविधौ-
(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 67).

The same idea is expressed by Bhavabhuthi thus in Malatimadhava :—

प्रेयो मित्रं बन्धुता वा समग्रा
सर्वे कामाः संपदो जीवितं च ।
स्त्रीणां भर्ता धर्मदाराश्च पुंसा-
मित्यन्योन्यं वत्सयोर्ज्ञातमस्तु ॥

Kalidasa has thus pictured womanhood as the

radiant centre of the finest social and spiritual life. Woman is the centre of an ever-widening circle of human relationships. In Raghuvamsa, XIV, 5 and 6, he describes the daughter-in-law showing reverence to the mother-in-law and the mother-in-law showing affection to the daughter-in-law as being the source of all auspiciousness and prosperity in the household. The famous verses in Sakuntala, Act IV, depicting the advice of Kanva to his daughter at her departure to her husband's home are deservedly famous and well-known. Through the mouth of Kanva the poet points out which women are the pets, and which the pests, of family life. He points out that absence of pride is the ornament of wealth and high station in life. भाग्येष्वनुत्सेकिनी । In Vikramorvasiya the same idea is expressed in regard to the king (अनुत्सेकः खलु विक्रमालंकारः ।). Again and again the poet uses the term *Grihini* (गृहिणी) as embodying his ideal of blessing and blessed womanhood. In Kumarasambhava, VI, 13, the poet says that good wives are the auspicious source of all righteous acts in life. (क्रियाणां खलु धर्म्याणां सत्पत्न्यो मूलकारणं).

It is no doubt true that the poet describes many of his heroes as polygamous persons. But

that is because in India princes generally married more wives than one for reasons of policy. Even among them the highest ideal was of course Sri Rama "who loved one only and who clove to her". The poet, even when he describes a polygamous prince, shows how the prince always consulted his first wife or took her consent before marrying another for love.

To those who think that the Indian ideal is that of a woman who is always subservient to her husband and who has no personality of her own it will be interesting to learn that Kalidasa says that women are entitled to advice and check and control their husbands if the larger interests of life and the demands of duty require such a course. The Parivrajika in *Malavikagnimitra* says to Queen Dharini that "house-wives, even though they are dominant in the house-hold, become irate only for proper reasons" (प्रभवन्त्यो-अपि हि भर्तृषु कारणकोपाः कुटुम्बिन्यः—Malavikagnimitra, Act I verse 18). The king tells Iravati in verse 16 of Act IV of Malavikagnimitra: "O beautiful one, why has thy face been clouded by anger without reason?"

The Hindu ideal of *sati* is one of the noblest ideals known to the human heart. It has been misunderstood and misapplied but its beauty and value are unmistakeable and undeniable. Kalidasa says in Kumarasambhava, IV, 33 to 36:

शशिना सह याति कौमुदी सह मेघेन तडित्प्रलीयते ।
प्रमदाः पतिवर्त्मगा इति प्रतिपन्नं हि विचेतनैरपि ॥

अमुनैव कषायितस्तनी सुभगेन प्रियगात्रभस्मना ।
नवपल्लवसंस्तरे यथा रचयिष्यामि तनुं विभावसौ ॥

कुसुमास्तरणे सहायतां बहुशः सौम्य गतस्त्वमावयोः ।
कुरु संप्रति तावदाशु मे प्रणिपाताञ्जलियाचितश्चिताम् ॥

तदनु ज्वलनं मदर्पितं त्वरयेर्दक्षिणवातवीजनैः ।
विदितं खलु ते यथा स्मरः क्षणमप्युत्सहते न मां विना ॥

(The moonlight disappears with the moon, and the lightning with the clouds. Even among inanimate objects the law of nature is that wives die along with their husbands. Smeared with the dear dust of my husband's burnt body, I shall lie on my bed of fire as on a soft bed of tender leaves. You have often spread for us a couch of blossoms. Make a funeral pyre for me who pray to you for it with folded

palms. And then with the aid of the fragrant southern breeze fan into flame the fire cast over my frame You know that Cupid cannot live even for a moment without me by his side). This readiness to fling away life at the call of love is at least as noble and glorious as the readiness to sacrifice life at the altar of one's native land. No one can understand or appreciate such a spirit of consecrated devotion unless his heart is touched by the fascinating passion of a great ideal. But such a supreme ideal is for the highest and the best. A drugged *sati* is like a soldier goaded at the point of the bayonet into the mouth of the enemy's cannon. Human institutions have a tendency to degradation and formalism and have to be purified and adjusted to the times but the ideal does not cease to be great on that account. The highest embodiment of it is of course in Goddess Sati about whom the poet says in Kumarasambhava, I, 21,

अथावमानेन पितुः प्रयुक्ता दक्षस्य कन्या भवपूर्वपत्नी ।
सती सती योगविसृष्टदेहा तां जन्मने शैलवधूं प्रपेदे ॥

(Sati, who was incarnate chastity and who was the former wife of God Siva, and who was induced to

cast off by means of yoga her body because of the insult offered by her father to her lord, sought Himavan's wife for her reincarnation).

But equally noble is the ideal of being the wife of a hero and the mother of a hero. The Parivrajika says to Queen Dharini in *Malavikagnimitra* :

भर्त्रासि वीरपत्नीनां श्लाघ्यायां स्थापिता धुरि ।
वीरसूरिति शब्दोऽयं तनयात् त्वामुपस्थितः ॥

(By your husband you have been placed at the head of the wives of heroes. From your son has come to you the designation of the mother of a hero).

The blessings of the matrons in the hermitage to the departing Sakuntala are equally significant.

जाते भर्तुर्बहुमानसूचकं महादेवीशब्दं लभस्व ।
वत्से वीरप्रसविनी भव ।
वत्से भर्तुर्बहुमता भव ।

(Child, attain the description of Mahadevi indicative of the reverence of your lord.
Child, become the mother of heroic sons,
Child, be beloved by your lord)
(Sakuntala Act IV)

Thus the highest ideals of womanhood are purity, and being the wife of a hero, and the mother of a hero.

Kalidas's highest idealisations of womanhood are of course in Uma and Sita. The most exquisite and poignant expression of woman's love and longing is found in Sita's farewell to Rama when Rama sent her away into exile. She blames her own misfortune and not her lord whom she calls as *Kalyanabuddhi* (one of true auspiciousness of nature). She sends word to him in a great message full of forgiveness and devotion that she would perform penance and pray for an unseparated life of love along with him and him alone as the lord of her soul in her next birth.

साहं सूर्यनिविष्टदृष्टिरूर्ध्वं प्रसूतेश्चरितुं यतिष्ये ।
भूयो यथा मे जननान्तरेऽपि त्वमेव भर्ता न च विप्रयोगः ॥
(Raghuvamsa, XIV, 66)





CHAPTER X.

Kalidasa's Ideals of Social Life.

BY a natural transition of thought we now proceed to Kalidasa's ideals of social life. It was on the basis of noble ideals of love, noble ideals of boyhood and girlhood, noble ideals of education, and noble ideals of manhood and womanhood that he built his fabric of noble social life. Without such a foundation the palace of social life will be like a house built on sands. In India the greatest values was always set upon a stable social order always refining itself into a higher state by adopting sound principles of sure and stable progress. India never became a slave to ever-new fantastic social theories resulting in ever-new attempts at digging up the foundations of social life and ever-new tinkerings with the body social. The modern west proceeds from complication to complication and chaos to chaos and tries by fantastic theories about social

fundamentals to cure acute social problems of its own creation. Accentuate and multiply and intensify desires ; arm nations ; grab at the land and wealth of others ; distribute unequally the wealth illegally and unfairly got from others ; live a life of wars abroad and strikes at home , and convulse society by ever-new rabid social theories and social changes :—that is the law of social life in the west. But India resolutely set her face against this social madness masquerading as social wisdom.

It is therefore necessary for us to consider the poet's ideals of individual life. He teaches us to be grateful to God for the gift of life because death is the universal rule and life is the exception and because even a moment's life is a great gain as it will, if well utilised, enable us to attain God.

मरणं प्रकृतिः शरीरिणां विकृतिर्जीवितमुच्यते बुधैः ।
क्षणमप्यवतिष्ठते श्वसन्यदि जन्तुर्ननु लाभवानसौ ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 87)

Thus the recognition of the value of the individual life as the means of self-perfection by the realisation of God is of the essence of Kalidasa's conception of life—a concept which is Indian to the core. He

shows us, further, two great truths which are the foundation of all noble individual life. He says that education should lead to wisdom and reverence (*prabodha* and *vinaya*), and that reverence is the ornament of prosperity.

सुतौ लक्ष्मणशत्रुघ्नौ सुमित्रा सुषुवे यमौ ।
सम्यगाराधिता विद्या प्रबोधविनयाविव ॥

कैकेय्यास्तनयो जज्ञे भरतो नाम शीलवान् ।
जनयित्रीमलंचक्रे यः प्रश्रय इव श्रियम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, X, 71, 70)

Such wisdom and reverence will remain permanent and potent factors in our lives only if we keep constantly in contact with men of ripe wisdom and experience. The poet says that even a man of dull mind becomes mentally powerful by being in touch with men of learning and wisdom.

मन्दोऽप्यमन्दतामेति संसर्गेन विपश्चितः ।

(Malavikagnimitra, II, 7).

Their blessings will give him the gift of wisdom, will convert the iron of his nature into pure gold, and will lift him from earth to heaven.

मूढं बुद्धमिवात्मानं हैमीभूतमिवायसम् ।
भूमेर्दिवमिवारूढं मन्ये भवदनुग्रहात् ॥

(Kumarasambhava, VI, 55)

We must also seek the aid of true and tried and noble-minded friends, because however able and learned and wise a man may be, he can never accomplish great—nay, even small—things in life without the loving aid of unselfish friends. The poet says :

अर्थं सप्रतिबन्धं प्रभुरधिगन्तुं सहायवानेव ।
दृश्यं तमसि न पश्यति दीपेन विना सचक्षुरपि ॥

(Malavikagnimitra–Act I verse 9)

(To attain the obstructed object of attainment, only the man who has friends will have the necessary ability. Without the aid of a lamp, even a man with vision is unable to see any object in the dark).

A man must further consciously and persistently refrain from bad thoughts and words and deeds, because his own impure *Vasanas* (tendencies) acquired in many previous births as well as the impure thoughts and words and deeds and the inauspicious forces around him may assail and overcome his higher nature but for his self-guarding vigilance. The poet says :

अपथे पदमर्पयन्ति हि श्रुतवन्तोऽपि रजोनिमीलिताः ।
(Raghuvamsa, IX, 74)

(Even men of learning tread the path of wrong owing to their eyes being closed by *rajoguna* or passion). He says further :

स्वादुभिस्तु विषयैर्हृतस्ततो दुःखमिन्द्रियगणो निवार्यते ॥
(Raghuvamsa, XIX, 49)

(The senses, dragged hither and thither by sweet objects is held back only with difficulty).

How are this self-restraint and self-ennoblement of the individual life to be attained ? This can be done only by a strict discipline of the body and the senses and the mind day after day. The poet insists on the habit of early rising and reflection on our past and present and future and on the true auspiciousness of soul, because in the early hours of the morning before sunrise nature and mind are calm and sweet and the light of the soul shines forth in its native and unobstructed glory. He says that the princes of the solar race were early risers (यथाकालप्रबोधिनां—Raghuvamsa, canto, I, verse 6). He says further in Raghuvamsa, XVII, 1, पश्चाद्यामिनी-

यामात्प्रसादमिव चेतना । (Just as the mind attains calm and clearness from the last portion of the night). We must carry out the scriptural injunctions as to our daily duties. Bath, *sandhya*, meditation, worship, and prayer are means by which we can perfect our individual life so that we may serve state and society efficiently and attain communion with God. The poet describes the kings of the solar race as performing their ethical and ceremonial duties with care and circumspection. He describes the same attitude in regard to the sages as well. He describes Sri Rama as strengthened and uplifted by the two great mantras *Bala* and *Atibala*. He lays special emphasis on purity and measure and truthfulness in speech. (सत्याय मितभाषिणां—Raghuvamsa canto I, verse 7). Even more than the physical and verbal elements are the mental elements in individual life. We must cultivate self-control (वशित्व) and same-mindedness in success and failure and steadfastness amidst the flux of desires and distractions. (विकारहेतौ सति विक्रियन्ते येषां न चेतांसि त एव धीराः—Kumarasambhava, I, 59), We must have that purity of mind which will tell us the right way when difficult situations arise in life. (सतां हि सन्देहपदेषु वस्तुषु प्रमाणमन्तःकरणप्रवृत्तयः Sakuntala, I, 19) We must

not have an iota of irreverence towards those who are godly and worthy of reverence, because such irreverence will close the doors of happiness and auspiciousness and prosperity upon us.

प्रतिबध्नाति हि श्रेयः पूज्यपूजाऽव्यतिक्रमः ।

(Raghuvamsa, I, 79)

We must cultivate generosity and liberality and munificence. Even the acquisitiveness of the good, like the absorption of water by clouds, is only for rendering back in an abundant measure.

आदानं तु विसर्गाय सतां वारिमुचामिव ।

(Raghuvamsa, IV, 86)

We must be humble and gracious even to those whom we conquer in the higher interests of life.

निर्जितेषु तरसा तरस्विनां शत्रुषु प्रणतिरेव कीर्तये

(Raghuvamsa, XI, 89)

We must cultivate a spirit of heroism in life. The poet says that Indra rejoiced at the heroism of Raghu, because greatness extorts respect from all.

तुतोष वीर्यातिशयेन वृत्रहा पदं हि सर्वत्र गुणैर्निधी-
यते । (Raghuvamsa, VII, 72)

We must constantly aim at doing something new and original for the service of man and the glory of God.

अप्यप्रसिद्धं यशसे हि पुंसामनन्यसाधारणमेव कर्म ।

(Kumarasambhava, III, 19)

Each must in his way and in his own sphere check evil and augment goodness and protect the oppressed and uphold the moral law (Kumarasambhava, I, 12 ; II, 40).

It is a natural transition from the ideal individual life to the ideal home life. In India the family was the unit of society. The Ramayana as the Epic of the Household enabled the Hindus to build the society and the state on the rock-bottom foundation of a happy family. I have already described Kalidasas's ideals of love and ideals of womanhood and shown how he regards woman as the natural and spiritual centre of the home. Kanva tells Sakuntala that she would be busy every moment of her life with tasks and duties demanded by her husband's high station in life.

विभवगुरुभिः कृत्यैस्तस्य प्रतिक्षणमाकुला ।

Women should according to the poet have becoming modesty and charming bashfulness but this did not in any way prevent them from playing their part in family and social life. In fact there was a fine delicacy and chivalry in the relations of the sexes. In *Megha-sandesa* the yaksha describes his wife to the cloud as the latter's *Sakhi* (friend) and *bhratrujaya* (brother's wife). India alone, of all the countries in the world, struck the golden mean between license and slavery in regard to the relations between the sexes and sublimated a sensual relation into a bond of soul.

The same concept of family life was applied in a broadened form in regard to the economic units and the social groups in the nation. As the ideal of duties was emphasised in preference to the ideal of rights, economic class war and social animosity were reduced to a minimum. Wealth was regarded as a gift of God, as a trust for man, and as an opportunity of service. The *Raghuvamsa* opens with an idealisation of village life and forest life and with cow-worship. In canto I the poet describes with love the pure and salubrious air in villages, the pure and godly life lived therein, and the simple

habits of life among the villagers. Urban life was not unknown. Great and prosperous and stately towns and cities dotted the land. The poet recurs again and again to Ayodhya, Ujjain and other cities. But the cities were centres and nourishers of villages and not stranglers and depopulators of villages. In short the poet's economic ideal is suggested in his famous description of Alaka, the capital of the God of Wealth, being irradiated by the lunar light from the moon on the head of God Siva, the God of Poverty.

गन्तव्या ते वसतिरलका नाम यक्षेश्वराणाम् ।
बाह्योद्यानस्थितहरशिरश्चन्द्रिकाधौतहर्म्या ॥

(Meghasendesa, I, 7)

The social life also was based on the same grand ideal of duty. Only when individual life is noble and when the economic inter-relatedness is harmonious can there be a happy social life. Given an individual life dominated by vicious desires and an economic life based on grab and struggle and competition, the construction of a happy social life is an absolute impossibility. Western society to-day is in a state of perpetually unstable equilibrium and

is in a state of chronic mental inability to realise and appreciate and accept the existence of a happy and harmonised social life anywhere and at any time in the world. But India in the time of Valmiki and in the time of Kalidasa knew a society which lived as a large and happy family and which did not disrupt social unity by avaricious eyes and fratricidal hands.

The compendious term *Varnasrama* was used to describe such a happy family life among harmonised social groups which lived in a state of co-ordinated service and mutual dependence and which was an organisation for national service. Though the term has come in for unmerited abuse and contempt in modern times, no other can be equally expressive and indicate that bundle of duties which constitutes the bonds of social life. Caste never implied mere privileges and never led to arrogance or oppression or exploitation and never bred discontent and resentment and enmity. The law laid down by Manu was understood in its proper spirit and gladly accepted and strictly enforced and cheerfully obeyed. In Raghuvamsa, I, 17 and XIV, 67, the poet has made this fact

abundantly clear. He shows how the Brahmins lived a life of self-denial and piety and penance and learnt and taught to all the truths of life and super-life. He describes the kshatriyas as liberal in gifts, foes of oppressors and friends of the oppressed, experts in self-control, and born rulers of men. Dilipa exclaims in Raghuvamsa, II, 53.

क्षतात्किल त्रायत इत्युदग्रः
क्षत्रस्य शब्दो भुवनेषु रूढः ।
राज्येन किं तद्विपरीतवृत्तेः
प्राणैरुपक्रोशमलीमसैर्वा ॥

(The word kshatra is well established in the worlds as meaning one who protects from injury. If one pursues a contrary course of life, what is the use of his sovereignty or even his stained and contemptible life ?)

Dushyanta says in Sakuntala, II, 16, that the Pururava Kings had taken a vow of performing a great sacrifice i.e. the protection of injured persons.

आपन्नाभयसत्रेषु दीक्षिताः खलु पौरवाः ॥

The poet describes in *Sakuntala* the Vaisyas as

persons who carried Indian commerce to the ends of the earth and who made frequent voyages on the high seas (समुद्रव्यवहारी) to increase the wealth of the land. Nay, he describes the Sudras as experts in their own lines of national service and as being proud of their traditional learning and occupation. The fisherman says in Sakuntala VI, 1,

सहजं किल यद्विनिन्दितं न खलु तत्कर्म विवर्जनीयम् ।

(Even a low profession should not be given up if it is hereditary). The so-called low castes were the cultivators and weavers and artisans, and the industrial arts and to some extent even the fine arts were their own. All the castes loved and respected and served one another and worked for the greatness of the motherland and the glory of God.

Even greater than *Varnadharma* was *Asrama dharma*. The four stages of a man's life were so arranged that he might pass by an easy transition from desire to desirelessness, from sense to soul, from earth to heaven. Shakespeare in his famous description of the seven stages of life in *As you like it* shows the evolution of life from childhood to old age and leaves us in a state of "second childishnes-

and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything". But the Indian Asrama Dharma has a different aim and a different ideal and a different goal. Kalidasa describes the stages of student life, householder's life, contemplative life, and ascetic life with loving reverence. He describes thus God Siva in the student's garb.

> अथाजिनाषाढधरः प्रगल्भवा-
> ग्ज्वलन्निव ब्रह्ममयेन तेजसा ।
> विवेश कश्चिज्जटिलस्तपोवनं
> शरीरबद्धः प्रथमाश्रमो यथा ॥

(Kumarasambhava, V, 30)

(Like an incarnation of the first stage of life there entered with matted locks a youth bearing on his person a deer-skin robe and a palasa stick, eloquent in speech and shining with the scriptural glory on his face). He describes in Raghuvamsa, V, 10, the householder's life as सर्वोपकारक्षम (the means of aid to all) and as one to be taken up after a full discipline and education and after getting the blessing and permission of the preceptor सम्यग्विनीयानुमतो गृहाय). The contemplative life is described again and again in his works. In Raghuvamsa and

Sakuntala we have fine descriptions of hermitages full of Munis and Rishis, who are full of meditative rapture and who guide and advise and uplift all. The kings of the solar race had this as their family vow.

गलितवयसामिक्ष्वाकूणामिदं हि कुलव्रतम् ।

(Raghuvamsa, III, 70)

Raghu in his hermitage is described in noble verses in the eighth canto in the same poem. The poet describes also with admiration the final stage of renunciation and the abandonment of the body by means of Yoga. The end, according to him, is not "second childishness and mere oblivion" but godliness and glory, not "sans everything" but the abandonment of a pure and strong and able body-life for a pure and perfect soul-life by means of *Yoga*—not a bankruptcy but a fulness of attainment.

शैशवेऽभ्यस्तविद्यानां यौवने विषयैषिणाम् ।
वार्धके मुनिवृत्तीनां योगेनान्ते तनुत्यजाम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, canto I verse 8)

(Of those who learnt all arts and sciences in youth, who had chaste desires in manhood, who lived in old age a contemplative life, and who abandoned the body by Yoga).



CHAPTER XI.

Kalidasa's Political Ideals

THE prevalent view is that Kalidasa is pre-eminently a poet of love and is an expert in Sringara Rasa. I have already shown how much wider is the circle of his interests and attainments. In fact his knowledge of polity and religion which are surely the dominating forces in manhood and age as love is the dominating force in youth is as wonderful as his knowledge of the human heart during love's young dream. Were it not so he would not be a universal poet and would not be the darling of all seasons of life and of all ages and climes.

The centre of sovereignty in every society is the focus and co-ordinating force in that society. Its potency and well-being are the real causes of national power and prosperity. According to Indian political thinkers in general, and Kalidasa in particular, the state is the heart of the society. It is and

must be in a state of incessant activity itself to pump the arterial blood of noble national life through the social and economic and political institutions to the very ends of the body-social and to keep the life-currents in perpetual and beneficent motion. The origin of Artha Sastra (the science of polity) is ascribed to Brahma Himself in the 58th Adhyaya of the Santi Parva of the Mahabharata. The works of the ancient Rishis Brihaspati and Bahudanti and Usanas who spread the political science are not extant, though later writers refer to Brihaspati and Usanas as the Acharyas of the science. If Usanas and Sukra are one, then we may take it that Sukraniti is the work of Usanas. Manu and Yajnavalkya refer to polity in their Dharma Sastras. But it is in the Mahabharata, Sukraniti, Kamandaka Niti, and especially in Kautilya's Artha Sastra that we find systematic expositions of the science of politics. Dandi, Varahamihira, Bana, and Visakhadatta refer to Kautilya.

India experimented with all types and varieties of states from tyranny to republics and finally found rest in a limited and constitutional monarchy guided and controlled by a cabinet working under the guid-

ance of a popular assembly convoked and convened on special occasions. The sacred and secular law was laid down in the Dharma Sastras, and the king as the head of the eighteen departments of the State administered the law with the help and counsel of the ministers. It is not my purpose to expatiate here on the Indian science of polity in general, fascinating though the subject be, and I shall proceed to discuss Kalidasa's views on Indian polity. One view is that he probably knew and was well versed in Kautilya's work. In Malavikagnimitra, Act I, there is a reference to Sastra and to *Tantrakaravachanam.* The poet refers to Usanas in Kumarasambhava, III, 6. It is doubtful whether by Tantrakara he refers to Usanas or Kautilya.

The poet refers to the *saptanga* or the seven limbs of the state. These are the king, the minister, the city, the country, the treasury, the army, and the ally.

स्वाम्यमात्यसुहृत्कोशराष्ट्रदुर्गबलानि च ।

Kalidasa knew well the respective parts played by each of these limbs in the life of a healthy body politic and has given us valuable ideas which are

valuable even today about these elements of political life.

In the case of the king a higher standard of individual and social life was imposed by Hindu law and custom, and adherence to it was rigidly exacted. *Noblesse oblige* is a concept even more familiar in the East than in the West. It is a fact of peculiar significance that he has devoted his greatest epic poem to the kings of the solar race and his greatest plays to the kings of the lunar race. In the delineation of both kings he has spent all the magical resources of his poesy but he rises to the height of his art in describing the kings of the solar race in those grand opening lines in Raghuvamsa which have settled for time the highest type of sovereignty :

सोऽहमाजन्मशुद्धानामाफलोदयकर्मणाम् ।
आसमुद्रक्षितीशानामानाकरथवर्त्मनाम् ॥

यथाविधिहुताग्नीनां यथाकामार्चितार्थिनाम् ।
यथापराधदण्डानां यथाकालप्रबोधिनाम् ॥

त्यागाय संभृतार्थानां सत्याय मितभाषिणाम् ।
यशसे विजिगीषूणां प्रजायै गृहमेधिनाम् ॥

शैशवेऽभ्यस्तविद्यानां यौवने विषयैषिणाम् ।
वार्धके मुनिवृत्तीनां योगेनान्ते तनुत्यजाम् ॥

(I, 3 to 8)

In another stanza in Raghuvamsa (VI, 22) he differentiates between a governed country and an ideally and beneficently governed country (Rajanvati).

कामं नृपाः सन्तु सहस्रशोऽन्ये
राजन्वतीमाहुरनेन भूमिम् ।
नक्षत्रताराग्रहसंकुलाऽपि
ज्योतिष्मती चन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः ॥

(Let thousands of kings exist. But by him alone the earth is said to be Rajanvati. The night though full of stars and planets, is illumined only by the moon).

The poet refers to the selection and coronation of the heir-apparent (Yuvaraja) in Raghuvamsa, III, 35. He shows that only the son endowed with noble nature and trained in virtuous ways used to be selected as the *Yuvaraja*. This appears also from the Ramayana. The royal coronation of king

Athithi is magnificently described by the poet in Raghuvamsa, XVII, verses 8 to 33. The poet describes how on that occasion prisoners were released, and even animals and birds were set free from yokes and cages.

Kalidasa's works are a veritable manual of kingly duties. We must however remember that what he lays down as the duties of kings applies in a lesser measure to ordinary individuls also. In the preceding chapter I refrained from going into a detailed description of individual discipline in duty lest there should be avoidable reduplication. The poet shows how the young princes Bharata and Ayus were trained in civil and military sciences and that in hermitages. Thus they became experts in compassion as well as experts in prowess. In Raghuvamsa, I, 13 to 15 the poet describes the majesty of discipline of body and mind :

व्यूढोरस्को वृषस्कन्धः शालप्रांशुर्महाभुजः ।
आत्मकर्मक्षमं देहं क्षात्रो धर्म इवाश्रितः ॥

सर्वातिरिक्तसारेण सर्वतेजोभिभाविना ।
स्थितः सर्वोन्नतेनोर्वीं क्रान्त्वा मेरुरिवात्मना ॥

आकारसदृशप्रज्ञः प्रज्ञया सदृशागमः ।
आगमैः सदृशारम्भ आरम्भसदृशोदयः ॥

(Broad-chested, bull-necked, tall as a sala tree, and mighty of arm, he looked like the martial Dharma incarnated in a form fit for its work in life. With all-transcending puissance and all-obscuring glory he by his all-dwarfing form and power was like the Meru. His wisdom was equal to his form ; his learning was equal to his wisdom ; his endeavour was equal to his learning ; and his attainment was equal to his endeavour).

If this is not a lofty ideal of individual life, I do not know what is a loftier ideal for all—for kings and humbler men as well. The poet describes how princes should master all the civil and military sciences. He says about Raghu's training :

धियः समग्रैः सगुणैरुदारधीः
क्रमाच्चतस्रश्चतुरर्णवोपमाः ।
ततार विद्याः पवनातिपातिभि-
र्दिशो हरिद्भिर्हरितामिवेश्वरः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, III, 30)

The four sciences referred to above are आन्वीक्षकी, त्रयी, वार्ता and दण्डनीतिः (philosophy, scripture, political economy, and political science).

Kalidasa emphasises first and foremost the avoidance of bad and evil tendencies and habits in kings. These are described in Raghuvamsa, IX, 7 as hunting, gambling, drinking and libidinousness. He contrasts the good king Dasaratha and the bad King Agnivarna thus :

न मृगयाभिरतिर्न दुरोदरं न च शशिप्रतिमाभरणं मधु ।
तमुदयाय न वा नवयौवना प्रियतमा यतमानमपाहरत् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, IX, 7)

(Neither hunting nor gambling nor wine bearing the moon's reflection nor youthful maidens corrupted him who endeavoured to attain an auspicious life).

अङ्कमङ्कपरिवर्तनोचिते तस्य निन्यतुरशून्यतामुभे ।
वल्लकी च हृदयंगमस्वना वल्गुवागपि वामलोचना ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XIX, 13)

(Two objects fit to be treasured on the lap were never absent from him—the sweet-toned Vina and the sweet-voiced maiden).

The poet shows in Raghuvamsa, IX, 49 and in Sakuntala Act II verses 4 and 5 how hunting within legitimate limits leads to many good results such as a strong and active and athletic frame, unerring aim, conquest of fatigue etc. In Raghuvamsa, IX, 74, he shows, however, that the killing of elephants is forbidden and how Dasaratha's breach of duty in that matter led to fatal results.

The poet describes in many places the valuable and auspicious individual qualities which must be acquired by men in general and by kings in particular. He says about King Dilipa :

जुगोपात्मानमत्रस्तो भेजे धर्ममनातुरः ।
अगृध्नुराददे सोऽर्थमसक्तः सुखमन्वभूत् ॥

ज्ञाने मौनं क्षमा शक्तौ त्यागे श्लाघाविपर्ययः ।
गुणा गुणानुबन्धित्वात्तस्य सप्रसवा इव ॥

अनाकृष्टस्य विषयैर्विद्यानां पारदृश्वनः ।
तस्य धर्मरतेरासीद्वृद्धत्वं जरसा विना ॥

स्थित्यै दण्डयतो दण्ड्यान्परिणेतुः प्रसूतये ।
अप्यर्थकामौ तस्यास्तां धर्म एव मनीषिणः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 21 to 23, 25)

(Fearless he protected himself. Free from disease he pursued the path of righteousness. Free from avarice he sought wealth. Free from attachment he enjoyed the pleasures of life. Learned yet silent, strong yet merciful, liberal yet unostentatious,—in him met many qualities as if they were one family. Unattracted by objects of desire and having reached the end of knowledge, the pure-minded king was old in wisdom though not in years. Punishing the wicked only to uphold the moral order and marrying for the sake of offspring, to that wise king even wealth and pleasure were transformed into duty).

Here we have a finer code of individual conduct than we could cull from many manuals of ethics. Nay, the poet says that in the case of King Aja not only was his wealth at the service of others but also his talents and energies and good qualities were at the service of all and that his strength was devoted to protection and his knowledge was devoted to the reverence of men of learning.

बलमार्तभयोपशान्तये विदुषां सत्कृतये बहुश्रुतम् ।
वसु तस्य विभोर्न केवलं गुणवत्तापि परप्रयोजना ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 31)

He says that King Dasaratha was restlessly active (अनलसः) to secure by his activity the grace of Goddess Lakshmi (Raghuvamsa, IX, 15). He describes how King Athithi conquered the inner foes in the heart to enable him to conquer his outer enemies, and how he harmonised Dharma, Artha, and Kama (righteousness and wealth and pleasure).

अतः सोऽभ्यन्तरान्नित्यान्षट्पूर्वमजयद्रिपून् ।
न धर्ममर्थकामाभ्यां बबाधे न च तेन तौ ।
नार्थं कामेन कामं वा सोऽर्थेन सदृशस्त्रिषु ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 45, 57)

In short the good kings are called by the poet as Rajarshis (king-saints). This word is frequently applied to Dushyanta in Sakuntala. In Raghuvamsa. I, 58, the kingship is itself called an Asrama and the king is described as the hermit in the palace—hermitage.

पप्रच्छ कुशलं राज्ये राज्याश्रममुनिं मुनिः ॥

Quite as important as the individual and personal good qualities of kings, are their social qualities. Mere saintliness will not enable a king to be a successful sovereign. He has to cultivate various

social qualities and graces well. The first and foremost quality is a power of pleasing and fascination. The poet says that just as the moon is called Chandra because he gladdens the hearts of all and the sun is called Tapana because he is a scorcher of all, the king is called Raja because he pleases all.

यथा प्रह्लादनाच्चन्द्रः प्रतापात्तपनो यथा ।
तथैव सोऽभूदन्वर्थो राजा प्रकृतिरञ्जनात् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, IV, 12)

The poet implies hereby that the king should combine sweetness and majesty. He says that the king should, like the south wind, be neither too chill nor too warm (नातिशीतोष्णः—Raghuvamsa, IV, 8). He must make each of his subjocts feel that he is the king's special favourite.

अहमेव मतो महीपतेरिति सर्वः प्रकृतिष्वचिन्तयत् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 8)

In Malavikagnimitra, I, 11 and 12, the king is described as resembling the ocean and striking the beholders with awe despite his suavity, and as possessing a glory which causes our eyes to look down and our feet to halt. He must be careful to see that the

people do not become deficient in loyalty and love (प्रकृतिवैराग्यं) In the case of King Athithi the poet says that the king was quite able to overcome all disaffection and disloyalty but took care that no acts were done to sow the seeds of disaffection. The King should have genial and pleasant looks and should volunteer words and speak with a smile.

प्रसन्नमुखरागं तं स्मितपूर्वाभिभाषिणम् ।

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 31)

Kalidasa says that King Dasaratha was not lowly and humble in speech even in Indra's presence, did not utter vain words even in jest, and was not harsh of speech even to his foes.

न कृपणा प्रभवत्यपि वासवे
न वितथा परिहासकथास्वपि ।
न च सपत्नजनेष्वपि तेन वा-
गपरुषा परुषाक्षरमीरिता ॥

(Raghuvamsa, IX, 8)

It becomes kings to love fame (यशःशरीर Raghuvamsa, II, 57). The poet describes how King Dushyanta whose noble nature had become nobler and mellower by grief had it proclaimed that whoever lost his

loved ones would find the king take their place (Sakuntala, VI, 23).

येन येन वियुज्यन्ते प्रजाः स्निग्धेन बन्धुना ।
स स पापादृते तासां दुष्यन्त इति घुष्यताम् ॥

The poet describes the kings as being specially reverential to Brahmins, because their sacrificial acts ensured copious rains and their purity and love of man and devotion to God secured a commonwealth free from diseases and early mortality and from other devastating and devitalising causes :

हविरावर्जितं होतस्त्वया विधिवदग्निषु ।
वृष्टिर्भवति सस्यानामवग्रहविशोषिणाम् ॥

पुरुषायुषजीविन्यो निरातङ्का निरीतयः ।
यन्मदीयाः प्रजास्तस्य हेतुस्त्वद्ब्रह्मवर्चसम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 62, 63)

In Raghuvamsa, I, 60 King Dilipa tells Vasishtha that the latter was the dispeller of all evils, human and divine, to the state.

दैवीनां मानुषीणां च प्रतिहर्ता त्वमापदाम् ॥

The poet says further that if righteous kingship and righteous saintship combine forces they could over-

come the whole world by the prowess of combined temporal and spiritual power.

स बभूव दुरासदः परैर्गुरुणाथर्वविदा कृतक्रियः ।
पवनाग्निसमागमो ह्ययं सहितं ब्रह्म यदस्त्रतेजसः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 4)

The poet refers in various places in his works to the daily duties of the king and to the division of his time day after day. In chapter XIX of Kautilya's Artha Sastra the author has divided the day and the night into eight parts and has fixed the tasks to be performed and the duties to be discharged during each fraction of the day. The poet has evidently accepted and followed this tabulation of time and task. In Vikramorvasiya Act II the poet says :

षष्ठे भागे त्वमपि दिवसस्यात्मनश्छन्दवर्ती

(You do what you like during the sixth portion of the day). Kautilya's Artha Sastra says :

'षष्ठे भागे मन्त्रः स्वैरविहारो वा ।

In Vikramorvasiya Act II and Sakuntala Act V the king is described as coming at noon from his

Dharmasana (the seat of justice). The king goes to his seat in the morning. In Act VI of Sakuntala the king is described as being unable to go there owing to his long wakefulness in the night and as asking his minister to be his representative and to send a report of the work done.

Thus the king's life was laborious and onerous in many ways. The poet says :

' सुखोपरोधि वृत्तं हि राज्ञामुपरुद्धवृत्तम् ।

(Raghuvamsa, XVIII, 18)

(The life of kings is incompatible with pleasure and is like life in a prison). Probably the best description of the laborious life of kings is found in Sakuntala, V, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Just as the sun never unyokes his horses and the wind blows day and night and Sesha bears the world-load for ever, the king knows no rest. He has to set the world aworking. His greatness leads to the satisfaction of his aims but he is worried by the tasks of preservation and protection. Like an umbrella kept in one's hand which pains to hold but keeps off the heat, the holding of the sceptre is not a means of pleasure nor is it a means of pain. The king forgetful of himself and his personal pleasures, labours

unceasingly for the world, just as a tree bears the heat of the sun's rays but confers shade on those who come to its foot.

भानुः सकृद्युक्ततुरङ्ग एव रात्रिंदिवं गन्धवहः प्रयाति ।
शेषः सदैवाहितभूमिभारः षष्ठांशवृत्तेरपि धर्म एषः ॥

औत्सुक्यमात्रमवसाययति प्रतिष्ठा
क्लिश्नाति लब्धपरिपालनवृत्तिरेवम् ।
नातिश्रमापनयनाय न च श्रमाय
राज्यं स्वहस्तधृतदण्डमिवातपत्रम् ॥

स्वसुखनिरभिलाषः खिद्यसे लोकहेतोः
प्रतिदिनमथवा ते वृत्तिरेवंविधैव ।
अनुभवति हि मूर्ध्ना पादपस्तीव्रमुष्णं
शमयति परितापं छायया संश्रितानाम् ॥

I shall now proceed to deal with the poet's exposition of the equipments and functions of sovereignty in national and international life. He says that the three *saktis* (powers) of a king are the prabhu sakti, mantra sakti, and utsaha sakti (the power of dominion, the power of diplomacy, and the power of alertness and enthusiastic energy). It is by these

mental possessions that political activity (Neeti) becomes fruitful and effective. He refers to the *Sakti-traya* (three saktis) in Raghuvamsa, XVII, 63. Kalidasa refers to Prabhusakti in his stanza :

अनयत्प्रभुशक्तिसंपदा वशमेको नृपतीननन्तरान् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 19)

(He brought by means of Prabhu Sakti all the other kings under his control).

He eulogises Utsaha Sakti in Kumarasambhava, I, 22 :

सम्यक्प्रयोगादपरिक्षतायां नीताविवोत्साहगुणेन संपत् ॥

(Just as prosperity is the fruit of Utsaha i.e., enthusiasm well applied to wholesome Niti, i.e., political activity).

He refers to Mantra Sakti in Raghuvamsa, XVII 50.

मन्त्रः प्रतिदिनं तस्य बभूव सहमन्त्रिभिः ।
स जातु सेव्यमानोऽपि गुप्तद्वारो न सूच्यते ॥

Kautilya arranges the three *Saktis* in the order of their importance as Mantra sakti, Utsaha

sakti, and Prabhu sakti. The poet seems to incline to the view that it is a combination of all that is of value. In Malavikagnimitra we are told about the application of Mantra Sakti. In Raghuvamsa, XVII, 68, he says that Raja Niti is fourfold चतुर्विधा i.e., *Sama*, *dana*, *bheda*, and *danda* (peace, gifts, dissension, and war). But *Niti* will be most effective and fruitful if it is put in operation at the propitious time.

काले खलु समारब्धाः फलं बध्नन्ति नीतयः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XII, 69)

(Nitis i.e. political activities begun at the right time bear fruit.)

The three great functions of sovereignty are national education, national protection, and national economic elevation. Kalidasa says about King Dilipa :

प्रजानां विनयाधानाद्रक्षणाद्भरणादपि ।
स पिता पितरस्तेषां केवलं जन्महेतवः ॥

(Raghuvamsa I, 24)

(He was the father of his subjects as he educated them, protected them, and ensured their economic

welfare. Their own fathers merely gave them embodiment).

In Sakuntala he says in Act V verse 8 :

> नियमयसि कुमार्गप्रस्थितानात्तदण्डः
> प्रशमयसि विवादं कल्पसे रक्षणाय ।
> अतनुषु विभवेषु ज्ञातयः सन्तु नाम
> त्वयि तु परिसमाप्तं बन्धुकृत्यं जनानाम ॥

(With your power of punishment you control those who pursue evil ways. You solve all disputes and protect the nation. When men are prosperous let them be surrounded by kith and kin. But the real function of loving kinsmen is fulfilled by you and in you alone). As already stated by me the supreme function is protection, and the very word kshatriya is derived from words which imply protection from injury.

> क्षतात्किलत्रायत इत्युदग्रः क्षत्रस्य शब्दो भुवनेषु रूढः ।
> (Raghuvamsa, II, 53)

But without the adequate performance of the other important functions of education and economic elevation, the mere upholding of law and order will

not be productive of the highest national benefit and welfare.

The king must attend with care to rural welfare and urban welfare. In Raghuvamsa we find in canto I a fine description of loyal and prosperous villages. The villages were close by hermitages and lived a life of purity and prosperity. But India knew urban economy also and possessed vast and populous and prosperous town and cities. The poet lovingly dwells on the glories of Ujjain in his Meghasandesa. In canto XVI of *Raghuvamsa* we find a grand and dramatic description of the deserted city of Ayodhya and the call of the presiding goddess of the city to King Kusa to renovate and repopulate the city. The poet then describes how armies of architects and artisans (silpi sanghas) renewed and rebuilt the great city, and how the masters of architectural lore (वास्तुविधानविदः) did the work in a sacramental spirit after taking a vow accompanied by a fast. (Raghuvamsa, XVI, 39) The king then entered the city as a lover enters his beloved's heart, and the city full of horses and elephants and human beings and houses and shops shone like a maiden decked with jewels from head to foot.

तस्याः स राजोपपदं निशान्तं
कामीव कान्ताहृदयं प्रविश्य ।
यथार्हमन्यैरनुजीविलोकं
संभावयामास यथाप्रधानम् ॥

समन्दुरासंश्रयिभिस्तुरंगैः
शालाविधिस्तम्भगतैश्च नागैः ।
पूराबभासे विपणिस्थपण्या
सर्वाङ्गनद्धाभरणेव नारी ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVI, 40, 41)

Kalidasa gives us many valuable ideas about the royal duties as an administrator of justice. The king should protect the injured and should never hurt the innocent. (Sakuntala, I, 10, 11). He must follow the law himself and make his subjects follow the law.

रेखामात्रमपि क्षुण्णादामनोवर्त्मनःपरम् ।
न व्यतीयुः प्रजास्तस्य नियन्तुर्नेमिवृत्तयः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 17)

(His subjects, like the wheels of a chariot moving in the direction of the charioteer's will did not swerve

an inch from the well-beaten track of life laid out by Manu).

In administering justice the king should be free from bias and should have no likes and dislikes:

द्वेष्योऽपि संमतः शिष्टस्तस्यार्तस्य यथौषधम् ।
त्याज्यो दुष्टः प्रियोऽप्यासीदङ्गुलीवोरगक्षता ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 28)

(Even an enemy, if he were a good man, was liked by the king just as medicine is liked by a sick man. Even a loved person, if he were bad, was discarded like a serpent-bitten finger.)

The king must sit in the hall of justice in the company of judges and decide disputes.

स धर्मस्थसखः शश्वदर्थिप्रत्यर्थिनां स्वयम् ।
ददर्श संशयच्छेद्यान्व्यवहारानतन्द्रितः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 39)

In the multitude of judges there is safety and there is wisdom as well. The poet says in Malavikagnimitra, Act I:

सर्वज्ञस्याप्येकाकिनो निर्णयाभ्युपगमो दोषाय ।

(The arrival at conclusions by one man, even if he knows all the sciences, is liable to error).

In Sakuntala the poet describes the king as deputing his minister to sit in the hall of justice as his representative when he could not preside himself. The king should suit the punishment to the offence (यथापराधदण्डानां Raghuvamsa canto I, verse 6) and should be neither too lenient nor too savage in his sentences. The poet recurs again and again to the need for a high ideal of justice as the sole source of social order.

The poet has given us valuable ideas in regard to taxation and finance as well. The principle of taxation is the collection of a small fraction of the income of each subject for combining and pooling their resources for the good of all, so that the total resources of the state may be effectively employed to counteract deficiencies anywhere in the common-wealth.

प्रजानामेव भूत्यर्थं स तेभ्यो बलिमग्रहीत् ।
सहस्रगुणमुत्स्रष्टुमादत्ते हि रसं रविः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I. 18)

(He collected taxes from his subjects for their own

good just as the sun collects vapour only to give it back to the earth with a thousandfold beneficence in the form of rain).

The king keeps a well-filled treasury not out of avarice but for the help of all his subjects.

कोशेनाश्रयणीयत्वमिति तस्यार्थसंग्रहः ।
अम्बुगर्भो हि जीमूतश्चातकैरभिनन्द्यते ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII. 60)

(He collected wealth for his treasury so that he might be a source of aid to all. It is the rain-filled cloud that is the delight of the *chataka* birds).

The king is entitled to collect a sixth of the income by way of tax. He is hence called *Shashtamsa Vritti* (Sakuntala, V, 4). In Sakuntala, I, 13, it is stated that the king gets also a sixth share of the penances and austerities performed by ascetics in the forest in his domain :

तपःषड्भागमक्षय्यं ददात्यारण्यको जनः ।

The same idea is expressed also in Raghuvamsa, XVII, 65 :

तपो रक्षन्स विघ्नेभ्यस्तस्करेभ्यश्च संपदः ।
यथास्वमाश्रमैश्चक्रे वर्णैरपि षडंशभाक् ॥

The king should get income not merely from taxes but also by the mining operations carried on by his state department of mining, by the forest produce got by his forest department etc.

खनिभिः सुषुवे रत्नं क्षेत्रैः सस्यं वनैर्गजान् ।
दिदेश वेतनं तस्मै रक्षासदृशमेव भूः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 66)

(The earth gave him wages in proportion to his protection. She gave him gems through mines, grain from fields, and elephants from forests).

In Sakuntala the poet refers to the operation of the law of escheat and shows how the king tempered by mercy the operation of that law.

The executive administration of the affairs of the kingdom was always carried on by the king with the help of his cabinet. The cabinet always met in secret and its decisions were known only at the moment of initiation of schemes of policy.

तस्य संवृतमन्त्रस्य गूढाकारेङ्गितस्य च ।
फलानुमेयाः प्रारम्भाः संस्काराः प्राक्तना इव ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 20)

(In the case of the king who kept secret his cabinet decisions and who did not divulge them even by his looks, his inaugurations of policy were inferred from results, just as the Vasanas or tendencies accompanying us from previous births are inferable from the events of our lives).

In Act I of Malavikagnimitra we have the description

ततः प्रविशत्येकान्तस्थपरिजनो मन्त्रिणा लेखहस्ते-
नान्वस्यमानो राजा—

The king is here described as holding counsel with his minister in a secret place. In Malavikagnimitra Act V there is a reference to the Mantri Parishad (cabinet) and the king seeks its approval of his decision on a question of foreign policy. In Raghuvamsa, I, 34 the poet says that the king entrusted the ministers with the burden of administration when he went to the forest.

तेन धूर्जगतो गुर्वी सचिवेषु निचिक्षिपे ।

In canto XIX of the poem the poet describes the ministers as entrusted with the state administration by the negligent and pleasure-loving King Agnivarna. During the king's fatal illness the ministers concealed

it from the subjects, and eventually chose his pregnant queen as his successor. The poet refers to the eighteen Tirthas or departments of state in Raghuvamsa, XVII, 68.

The king's military duties are described by the poet in many of his works. The poet says that mere diplomacy is cowardice and that mere military prowess is the law of the jungle and that a king should combine both suitably to secure his ends.

कातर्यं केवलानीतिः शौर्यं श्वापदचेष्टितम् ।
अतः सिद्धिं समेताभ्यामुभाभ्यामन्वियेष सः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 47)

The poet says that a king should have forts.

दुर्गाणि दुर्ग्रहाण्यासन् तस्य रोद्धुरपि द्विषाम् ।
न हि सिंहो गजास्कन्दी भयाद्गिरिगुहाशयः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 52)

(Though he carried on a successful war of offence, his forts were untakeable by the enemy. A lion, which could kill elephants, has its cave-residence but not because of fear).

The poet refers in Raghuvamsa, XVII, 67, to

the six *gunas* (viz. sandhi, vigraha, asana, samsraya, yatra, and Dvaitibhava) and the six *balas*. I shall refer to the six *gunas* later on. The six *balas* were मौलंभृत्यः सुहृच्छ्रेणी द्विषदाटविकं बलं (hereditary troops, mercenary troops, volunteers, artisan guild troops, enemy troops and wild tribes). The poet says :

स गुप्तमूलप्रत्यन्तः शुद्धपार्ष्णिरयान्वितः ।
षड्विधं बलमादाय प्रतस्थे दिग्जिगीषया ॥

(Raghuvamsa, IV, 26)

(He protected his territory left behind and overcame the enemies on the way and then aided by auspicious divinities, started, with his six-fold troops, on his mission of universal conquest).

Thus every well-planned military expedition implies a careful defence of the native land and a clearance of foes on the way. The poet says also that a military expedition implies engineering feats such as digging tanks in deserts, building bridges over rivers, and clearance of jungles.

मरुपृष्ठान्युदंभांसि नाव्याः सुप्रतरा नदीः ।
विपिनानि प्रकाशानि शक्तिमत्वाच्चकार सः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, IV, 31)

The poet says clearly that warfare should be righteous and in accordance with *dharma* and not a cunning and savage and murderous attack.

But no king should use war merely to overthrow other kings and annex their territories. Conquests should be for fame (यशसे विजिगीषूणां Raghuvamsa, I, 7) and in the cause of *dharma*. (Dharmavijayi, Raghuvamsa, IV, 43), Conquests should not be for mere aggrandisement and annexation,

गृहीतप्रतिमुक्तस्य स धर्मविजयी नृपः ।
श्रियं महेन्द्रनाथस्य जहार न तु मेदिनीम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, IV, 43)

(The king who sought victory in the cause of Dharma took the glory of affluence, but not the territory, from the king of Mahendra whom he captured and released),

न खरो न च भूयसा मृदुः पवमानः पृथिवीरुहानिव ।
स पुरस्कृतमध्यमक्रमो नमयामास नृपाननुद्धरन् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 9)

(Neither too cruel nor too gentle, like the wind dealing with trees, he adopted a course of medium prowess and bent, but did not uproot, the other kings).

In Raghuvamsa, XVII, 42, he refers to uprooting and restoring the enemy kings (शत्रूनुद्धृत्य प्रतिरोपयन् ।). He refers to this also in Raghuvamsa, IV, 37 (उत्खातप्रतिरोपिताः). The poet says in Raghuvamsa, XVII, 76 that conquest of other kings for performing the Asvamedha sacrifice is a righteous act, though it results in the overthrow of others by devices.

परामिसंधानपरं यद्यप्यस्य विचेष्टितम् ।
जिगीषोरश्वमेधाय धर्म्यमेव बभूव तत् ॥

But no king should indulge in unscrupulous and unrighteous methods of warfare though he ought to know them.

कूटयुद्धविधिज्ञोऽपि तस्मिन्सन्मार्गयोधिनि ।
भेजेऽभिसारिकावृत्तिं जयश्रीर्वीरगामिनी ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 69)

(In respect of King Athithi who adopted righteous methods of war, though he knew the unrighteous methods of war, the goddess of victory, who seeks heroes, sought him like a fond and faithful mistress courting her lover).

In respect of international relations, the poet tells us that kings should resort to the six *gunas*. He says that Aja employed the six gunas beginning with *Panabandha* i.e., sandhi (peace).

पणबन्धमुखान्गुणानजः षडुपायुङ्क्त समीक्ष्य तत्फलम् ।

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 21)

In Raghuvamsa, X, 86 he says :

नय इव पणबन्धव्यक्तयोगैरुपायैः ।

(The six Gunas are Sandhi, Vigraha, Yana, Asana, Dwaidha, and Asraya.)

A successful foreign policy will be the result of the wise applications of the above elements. In Raghuvamsa XVIII, 34, the poet describes how one of the kings was rightly named Dhruvasandhi (the invincible peacemaker). War should be undertaken only as against a potentate of inferior resources.

शक्येष्वेवाभवद्यात्रा तस्य शक्तिमतः सतः ।
समीरणसहायोऽपि नाम्भःप्रार्थी दवानलः ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 56)

(His military expedition i.e., yatra was against lesser potentates, though he had power. The forest-fire,

though aided by a breeze, does not seek to attack water).

Kautilya says हीनेन विगृह्णीयात् । In Malavikagnimitrà Act I the minister says that a new king not yet rooted in the affections of his subjects is easily uprootable like a newly planted tree.

अचिराधिष्ठितराज्यः शत्रुः प्रकृतिष्वरूढमूलत्वात् ।
नवसंरोहणशिथिलस्तरुरिव सुकरः समुद्धर्तुम् ॥
(Act I, verse 8)

In the same play in Act V the conquered territory is given to two brothers, the river Varada being the boundary between their respective domains. In Act V verse 14 it is stated that they would carry out the suzerain's will like two horses drawing a car under the owner's control.

Kalidasa rose to the conception of a united India having the headship of the earth. I shall deal with this aspect later on. In Raghuvamsa, I, he describes the kings of the solar race as the sovereigns of the entire earth from sea to sea. In the same canto he says that the king ruled like a single city the entire earth which knew no other ruler. (अनन्यशासनामुर्वीं शशासैकपुरीमिव ।). In Sakuntala, VII, 33 we have a prophecy that Bharata will rule the

whole earth (पुरा सप्तद्वीपां जयति वसुधामप्रतिरथः ।). In Act I verse 1 the sages bless Dushyanta with the birth of a prince who would be a Chakravarti (Sovereign of the entire earth). In Vikramorvasiya the poet refers to the rule of the whole earth under one umbrella on a throne whose footstool is bright with the light of gems in the bending crowns of kings doing homage to the Emperor.

समन्तमौलिमणिरञ्जितपादपीठ-
मेकातपत्रमवनेर्न तथा प्रभुत्वम् ॥

(Vikramorvasiya, III, 19)

But the consummation of a life of Dharmic Sovereignty is in retirement and contemplation and Yoga. Political life is not an end in itself but a means to an end for both sovereign and subjects. In Raghuvamsa, III, 70, it is said that the *kula-vrata* of Ikshvakus is for the king and the queen to retire into a hermitage after crowning their son as king. In canto VIII there is a wonderful contrast of the spiritual sovereignty of Raghu and the secular sovereignty of Aja. In Sakuntala, IV, 19, when Sakuntala asks when she can come back to her beloved hermitage, Kanva replies :

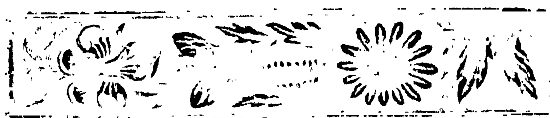
भूत्वा चिराय चतुरन्तमहीसपत्नी
दौष्यन्तिमप्रतिरथं तनयं निवेश्य ।
भर्त्रा तदर्पित कुटुम्बभरेण सार्धं
शान्ते करिष्यसि पदं पुनराश्रमेऽस्मिन्

(Having been the queen of the whole earth and placed your son on the throne without an enemy and having left the family in his hands, you can come back with your lord to this peaceful hermitage).

In the last benedictory stanza in Sakuntala we find a summation of the poet's political ideals in relation to the highest ideals of life. He points out that only when proper political ideals exist, learning will flourish and spiritual attainment will be possible.

प्रवर्ततां प्रकृतिहिताय पार्थिवः
सरस्वती श्रुतिमहिता महीयसाम् ।
ममापि च क्षपयतु नीललोहितः
पुनर्भवं परिगतशक्तिरात्मभूः ॥

(Let the king strive for the welfare of all his subjects. Let the learning of those who are great in scriptural lore flourish. May God Siva, who is omnipotent and self-existent, grant me emancipation from the bonds of birth).



CHAPTER XII.

Kalidasa's Spiritual Ideals

I have been describing till now the ascent of Kalidasa's thought, and we are now approaching the highest peak (Kailasa) of his thought. While Hinduism is the most universal of religions, we find in Kalidasa the most universal aspect of Hinduism. There is not the slightest trace of bigotry or narrowness or obscurantism in his spiritual vision. If only Kalidasa's Hinduism can become vital and regnant in our land, Hindu unity would be an achieved fact and Hinduism would reach its highest height and completest consummation.

The validity of spiritual ideals depends on the existence of a soul. Without such a belief and such a fact the whole of our spiritual life is emptied of its content. It is not necessary for this purpose to decide whether the persistence of personal identity is in repect of a plurality of souls or whether there is only one entity *viz.* Parabhrama. Nor is it

necessary to discuss here how the sense of personal identity exists or whether there could be an immortality of psychic life apart from the mind and the senses or whether there is a gradation of bliss or sameness and identity of bliss among a plurality of souls. We need not embark on these speculations and become "in wandering mazes lost." Kalidasa is a poet through and through and while his grip on the eternal verities of life is thorough and perfect, he refuses to be drawn into these eternal and eternally barren and eternal insoluble controversies.

The only true and secure basis of the spiritual life is a clear and continuous sense of the transience of our brief earthly life. Life is a mere succession of pains and pleasures, and is ever overshadowed by death. The greatest dramatist of England says:

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

Kalidasa says :

कस्यात्यन्तं सुखमुपनतं दु:खमेकान्ततो वा
नीचैर्गच्छत्युपरि च दशा चक्रनेमिक्रमेण ॥

(Meghasandesa, II, 48)

(Who has got infinite joy or infinite pain ? Every one goes down and goes up like a revolving wheel)

मरणं प्रकृतिः शरीरिणां विकृतिर्जीवितमुच्यते बुधैः ।
क्षणमप्यवतिष्ठते श्वसन्यदि जन्तुर्ननु लाभवानसौ ॥
(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 7)

(Death is the universal law and life is the exception. If a person breathes even for moment, is he not a lucky man ?) Thus life is a great *labha* (gain), because by it alone we can attain the eternal super-life. In Raghuvamsa VIII, 40, the poet points out that medicine avails only if life is yet left in this birth.

प्रतिकारविधानमायुषः सति शेषे हि फलाय कल्पते ॥

The same outer fact or event acts as nectar or poison to us according to the decrees of Providence.

विषमप्यमृतं क्वचिद्भवेदमृतं वा विषमीश्वरेच्छया ॥
(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 46)

The right attitude towards death is that of expectancy and composure because the releasing angel leading us to ever-new realms of auspiciousness.

अवगच्छति मूढचेतनः प्रियनाशं हृदि शल्यमर्पितम् ।
स्थिरधीस्तु तदेव मन्यते कुशलद्वारतया समुद्धृतम् ॥
(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 88)

(The deluded man regards the death of the dear one as an instrument of agony. But the man of steadfast mind regards it as the removal of an instrument of pain and as the open door to auspiciousness). But this does not mean any pessimism at all. Kalidasa says that our body is the first and the best means of *dharma* (शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनं Kumarasambhava, V, 33). We must bear our part in life as householders and citizens because such a stage of our life is the means of universal service (सर्वोपकारक्षममाश्रमं Raghuvamsa, V, 10).

We must leave noble offspring as proofs and pledges of our love towards the world. Such sons are also a means of our welfare here and hereafter. They are also the means by which we discharge our debt to our ancestors.

सन्ततिः शुद्धवंश्या हि परत्रेह च शर्मणे ।

(Raghuvamsa, I. 69)

(Children born of a pure lineage are for happiness hereafter and here).

न संयतस्तस्य बभूव रक्षितुर्वि-
सर्जयेद्यं सुतजन्महर्षितः ।

ऋणाभिधानात्स्वयमेव केवलं

तदा पितॄणां मुमुचे स बन्धनात् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, III, 20)

(To the king who was delighted with the birth of a son and who was a good protector of his people, there was none in prison whom he would release. He released himself from the prison of the debt due to his ancestors).

Kalidasa has affirmed with perfect strength of conviction the doctrine of *karma* which is the pivot of Indian thought. In Raghuvamsa, I, 20, he says.

फलानुमेयाः प्रारम्भाः संस्काराः प्राक्तना इव ॥

(Like the Vasanas or tendencies acquired in former births which are inferable from events).

He says further :

परलोकजुषां स्वकर्मभिर्गतयो भिन्नपथा हि देहिनाम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, VIII, 85)

(Diverse are the ways of embodied beings who go to the other world as a result of their actions in this world).

It is thus clear that pre-existence is as certain as post-existence. In Raghuvamsa, VII, 15 the poet says:

मनो हि जन्मान्तरसंगतिज्ञम् ।

(The mind knows its relatedness to former births).

Mallinatha says well in his commentary on this line :

तदेवेदमिति प्रत्यभिज्ञाभावेऽपि वासनाविशेषवशादनुभूतार्थेषु मनःप्रवृत्तिरस्तीत्युक्तम् । जन्मान्तरसाहचर्यमेवात्र प्रवर्तकमिति भावः ।

(Even though we have no clear recollection of former births, our minds move in the paths of familiar enjoyments, owing to the compulsive force of our Vasanas. Our companionships and affinities in previous births impel us in our friendships and relationships in this life).

In Raghuvamsa, XIV, 62, Sita refers to sins in past births (जन्मान्तरपातकानां). In Sakuntala, I, 17 the poet makes us realise that the fruits of our actions in former births seek us and reach us through the gateway of events as ordained by God.

अथवा भवितव्यानां द्वाराणि भवन्ति सर्वत्र ।

We must be incessantly and righteously active and build up a better future and we can by devotion on our part and Grace on the part of God even counteract the inner compulsion of tendencies and the outer compulsion of events.

But we can know the *Sadhanas* or means of self-perfection only by means of *pramanas* (authoritative sources of truth). In Raghuvamsa, XIII, 60 the poet refers to the scriptures as आप्तवाचः (loving and disinterested and perfect gospel). In the hymn to Brahma in Kumarasambhava, II, 12, the poet says :

उद्घातः प्रणवो यासां न्यायैस्त्रिभिरुदीरणम् ।
कर्म यज्ञः फलं स्वर्गस्तासां त्वं प्रभवो गिराम् ॥

(You are the source of those words whose beginning is *Om*, which are uttered in the three modes of intonation, which inculcate sacrifices, and whose fruit is heaven). Thus the scriptures show us the higher way. The poet says that the Smritis follow the meaning of the Srutis (Vedas :)

श्रुतेरिवार्थं स्मृतिरन्वगच्छत् । (Raghuvamsa, II, 2)

In his works the poet refers to the six darsanas as well as to the supreme science of the soul (*adhyatma vidya*) in particular, besides referring to *srutis* and *smritis.* In various places he shows a thorough knowledge of Tarka, Vyakarana, and other Veda Angas. Out of the six *darsanas*, we find in his works frequent references to the Sankhya and the Yoga and the Vedanta. In Raghuvamsa, XIII, 60 and Kumarasambhava, II, 13, we have a clear reference to the Samkhya philosophy, though the doctrine as set forth is Vedantic and not purely Samkhya.

आप्तवाचो बुद्धेरिवाऽव्यक्तमुदाहरन्ति ।
त्वामामनन्ति प्रकृतिं पुरुषार्थप्रवर्तिनीम् ।
तद्दर्शिनमुदासीनं त्वामेव पुरुषं विदुः ॥

(They regard you as Prakriti which urges souls in the direction of Purusharthas *i. e.*, enjoyment and liberation. They regard you further as the Purusha who is detached and who merely witnesses the activities of Prakriti).

I shall refer to *Yoga* later on. The poet refers to *Vedanta* in the opening benedictory stanza in *Vikramorvasiya*, and refers to *Trayi* (the three

Vedas) and *Adhyatma Vidya* (the science of the soul) in Malavikagnimitra, I, 14 :

त्रयी विग्रहवत्येव सममध्यात्मविद्यया ॥

In respect of the means of spiritual welfare, Kalidasa laid the greatest stress on the regulation of daily life and on a high and lofty standard of private and public morality. He knew and declared that a high standard of private and public morality could never be kept up without daily discipline of life and daily self-examination. I have already discussed in great detail Kalidasa's ideals of individual life in relation to social life. I shall now mention briefly his expressed individul ideals in relation to spiritual life. Lofty ideals of personal conduct are required both for an ideal social life and for an ideal spiritual life. But for an ideal spiritual lite certain elements of individual creed and conduct, which are not of primary importance in regard to social life, have a primary importance so far as the life spiritual is concerned.

Irreverence is a great spiritual evil and reverence is a great spiritual asset. The poet says :

प्रतिबध्नाति हि श्रेयः पूज्यपूजाव्यतिक्रमः ।

(Raghuvamsa, I, 79)

(The transgression of the rule of reverence to those worthy of reverence bars the door of auspiciousness).

We must not speak ill of others or hear abusive talk about others.

न केवलं यो महतोऽपभाषते शृणोति तस्मादपि यः स पापभाक् ॥ (Kumarasambhava, V, 83)

(Not only is he sinful who speaks ill of the great. He also is sinful who hears abusive talk about the great). If at any time we step aside from the path of rectitude, we must be full of a deep and sincere repentance.

अकामोपनतेनेव साधोर्हृदयमेनसा ॥

(Raghuvamsa, X, 39)

(Like the heart of a good man which burns with shame at the thought of a sin committed through negligence though without evil passion).

The possibility of self-punishment for the sin of another so as to overcome such sin is stated in Raghuvamsa, XII, 19. The striver in the spiritual path must regulate his daily life carefully on the positive side also. He must wake up early every

day and meditate on his spiritual welfare यथा कालप्रबोधिनां— Raghuvamsa, I, 6). In Kumarasambhava, VIII, 52, the poet emphasises the importance of *Sandhya*. He emphasises mental purity in Sakuntala, I, 19. The supremacy of Dharma over Artha and Kama is thus stressed in Kumarasambhava, V, 38 :

अनेन धर्मः सविशेषमद्य मे
त्रिवर्गसारः प्रतिभाति भाविनि ।
त्वया मनोनिर्विषयार्थकामया
यदेक एव प्रतिगृह्य सेव्यते ॥

(O thou of noble heart ! To me Dharma appears as superior to Artha and Kama and as being the quintessential factor, because it is pursued by *you* with a mind free from love of Artha and Kama).

(A famous passage in the Upanishads and an equally famous passage in the Gita state that the *sadhanas* (means) of the spiritual life are *yajna*, *dana*, and *tapas* (sacrifices, gifts and austerities). The importance of sacrifices is frequently emphasised by Kalidasa :

दुदोह गां स यज्ञाय सस्याय मघवा दिवम् ।

संपद्विनिमयेनोभौ दधतुर्भुवनद्वयम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 26)

(King Dilipa milked the earth for the performance of sacrifices, and Indra milked heaven for the prosperity of the crops on the earth. Thus by the exchange of the vital essence in each place, they upheld both worlds).

हविरावर्जितं होतस्त्वया विधिवदग्निषु ।
वृष्टिर्भवति सस्यानामवग्रहविशोषिणाम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, I, 62)

(O sage, by your oblations thrown according to scriptural rules into the sacrificial fire, we get seasonable rains to give life to crops which dry up by the holding back of showers).

The third canto in *Raghuvamsa* is a glorification of the great Asvamedha sacrifice. The fifth canto in *Raghuvamsa* is a glorification of the virtue of *Dana* or gifts to deserving persons. The spiritual value of *tapas* (penance and austerity) is emphasised in many places by Kalidasa. In Sakuntala there are frequent references to *Dharmaranya* and the power of the hermitages to purify our souls. The king says in Act I :

पुण्याश्रमदर्शनेन तावदात्मानं पुनीमहे ।

(Let us purify ourselves by the sight of the holy hermitage). Matali describes in Act VII Hemakuta as तपःसंसिद्धिक्षेत्रं (the field of attainment of austerities). The king thereupon replies :

· तेन ह्यनतिक्रमणीयानि श्रेयांसि । प्रदक्षिणीकृत्य भगवन्तं गन्तुमिच्छामि ॥

(We should not transgress our means of spiritual auspiciousness. I desire to bow before the holy sage).

In Sakuntala Act VII the poet says that every event—past, present and future—is clear to the mental vision of a sage (तपःप्रत्यक्षं सर्वमेव तत्रभवतः ।) and that even before we see a sage, his blessings bring prosperity and happiness to us.

उदेति पूर्वं कुसुमं ततः फलं
घनोदयः प्राक्तदनन्तरं पयः ।
निमित्तनैमित्तिकयोरयं क्रमः
तवःप्रसादस्य पुरस्तु संपदः ॥

(Sakuntala, VII, 30)

(The flower comes before the fruit and the cloud before the rain. Such is sequence of cause and

effect. But prosperity seeks us even before you actually bestow your blessings.)

The power of Tapas (penance) is thus described in Sakuntala, II, 7.

> शमप्रधानेषु तपोधनेषु
> गूढं हि दाहात्मकमस्ति तेजः ।
> स्पर्शानुकूला इव सूर्यकान्ता-
> स्तदन्यतेजोऽभिभवाद्वमन्ति ॥

(In ascetics full of self-control there is hidden a burning glory. Like sunstones *i.e.*, Suryakanta stones they are cool to the touch but emit flame when lights other than the light of the sun come in rough contact).

In Sakuntala, II, 13, the poet describes how a sixth share of such tapas goes to the king and protects him and his temporal power. It is in the Kumarasambhava that we have beautiful and noble descriptions of Tapas. Siva's tapas is described in Canto I. In canto V the tapas of Parvati is described. In canto VI we have a grand description of the great seven sages and Arundhati who are described as illuminating the sky with the glory of their Tapas.

By such *sadhanas* the soul can attain heaven (svarga). But the poet knows that such heaven is not an eternal abode of eternal bliss. When the store of merit (*punya*) is exhausted, the soul must come back to the earth as the home of spiritual effort (कर्मभूमि). The poet shows how by devotion and knowledge alone the highest spiritual liberation from the round of rebirths can be attained. This idea of liberation from rebirths (samsara) is glorified in the last verse in Sakuntala. In Kumarasambhava, II, 51, he says :

कर्मबन्धच्छिदं धर्मं भवस्येव मुमुक्षवः ।

(Just as the seekers of liberation from rebirth seek the Dharma which can cut the knot of Karma).

What then is the means by which we can attain the highest spiritual realisation leading to liberation from rebirths ? Self-less action (nishkama karma) is the first step in the path. The poems and plays of Kalidasa emphasise such a mental attitude. It is only the person who has done such karma yoga that can become a great devotee and an expert in Bhakti Yoga. The importance of *mantras* is again and again brought out by the poet.

In Raghuvamsa, XI, 9, he extols the uplifting and protective power of the two mantras *Bala* and *Atibala.* He emphasises also the importance of Yoga. In Raghuvamsa, I, 73 he describes Vasishtha as ध्यानस्तिमितलोचनः (with eyes fixed in contemplation) and compares him to a pond with fish in a state of sleep therein (सुप्तमीनह्रदः)। In Kumarasambhava, XVII, 47 he says :

योगीव योगविधिशुद्धक[illegible]ना यमाद्यैः सांसारिकं विषय-संघममोघवीर्यम् ॥

(Just as a Yogi, whose mind has become pure by Yama *i.e.*, self-control etc., conquers the all-powerful array of objects of worldly desire).

It is in Kumarasambhava, III, 45 to 50, that we find the classic description of Siva the supreme yogi. The poet compares him to a rainless cloud and a waveless sea and a lamp set in a windless place.

पर्यङ्कबन्धस्थिरपूर्वकायं ऋज्वायतं संनमितोभयांसम् ।
उत्तानपाणिद्वयसंनिवेशात्प्रफुल्लराजीवमिवाङ्कमध्ये ॥

भुजङ्गमोन्नद्धजटाकलापं कर्णावसक्तद्विगुणाक्षसूत्रम् ।
कण्ठप्रभासङ्गविशेषनीलां कृष्णत्वचं ग्रन्थिमतीं दधानम् ॥

किंचित्प्रकाशस्तिमितोग्रतारैर्भ्रूविक्रियायां विरतप्रसङ्गैः ।
नेत्रैरविस्पन्दितपक्ष्ममालैर्लक्ष्यीकृतघ्राणमधोमयूखैः ॥

अवृष्टिसंरम्भमिवाम्बुवाहमपामिवाधारमनुत्तरङ्गम् ।
अन्तश्चराणां मरुतां निरोधान्निवातनिष्कंपमिव प्रदीपम् ॥

कपालनेत्रान्तरलब्धमार्गै-
ज्योतिःप्ररोहैरुदितैः शिरस्तः ।
मृणालसूत्राधिकसौकुमार्यां
बालस्य लक्ष्मीं ग्लपयन्तमिन्दोः ॥

मनो नवद्वारनिषिद्धवृत्ति
हृदि व्यवस्थाप्य समाधिवश्यम् ।
यमक्षरं क्षेत्रविदो विदुस्त-
मात्मानमात्मन्यवलोकयन्तम् ॥

The poet says in Raghuvamsa, X, 23 :

अभ्यासनिगृहीतेन मनसा हृदयाश्रयम् ।
ज्योतिर्मयं विचिन्वन्ति योगिनस्त्वां विमुक्तये ॥

The poet says that Jnana (wisdom) is the means of attaining perfect transcendence from action and (rebirth).

इतरो दहने स्वकर्मणां ववृते ज्ञानमयेन वह्निना ॥

(The other endeavoured to burn up all actions by the fire of knowledge).

Kalidasa has stated again and again the importance of our love to God and of His grace to us for the attainment of liberation from births by means of God-realisation. In the famous introductory stanza in *Vikramorvasiya* he says :

वेदान्तेषु यमाहुरेकपुरुषं व्याप्य स्थितं रोदसी
यस्मिन्नीश्वर इत्यनन्यविषयः शब्दो यथार्थाक्षरः ।
अन्तर्यश्च मुमुक्षुभिर्नियमितप्राणादिभिर्मृग्यते
स स्थाणुः स्थिरभक्तियोगसुलभः निःश्रेयसायास्तु नः ॥

(May God Siva give us the highest bliss of liberation—Siva who is described in Vedanta as pervading earth and sky, in regard to whom the word Iswara is appropriate in its meaning, who is sought within by seekers of liberation by controlling the breath, and who is easily attainable by steadfast devotion).

Kalidasa's conception of God-head is sublime and wonderful. We have fine descriptions of

Brihaspati, Agni, Indra, Subrahmanya and other deities in his works. Brihaspati is described in Kumarasambhava, II, 30. Agni is praised by Indra himself in Kumarasambhava, X, 17 to 23.

प्रीतः स्वाहास्वधाहन्तकारैः प्रीणयसे स्वयम् ।
देवान्पितॄन्मनुष्यांस्त्वमेकस्तेषां मुखं यतः ॥

त्वयि जुह्वति होतारो हवींषि ध्वस्तकल्मषाः ।
भुञ्जन्ति स्वर्गमेकस्त्वं स्वर्गमाप्तौ हि कारणम् ॥

हवींषि मन्त्रपूतानि हुताश त्वयि जुह्वतः ।
तपस्विनस्तपःसिद्धिं यान्ति त्वं तपसां प्रभुः ॥

निधत्से हुतमर्काय स पर्जन्योऽभिवर्षति ।
ततोऽन्नानि प्रजास्तेभ्यस्तेनासि जगतः पिता ॥

अन्तश्चरोऽसि भूतानां तानि त्वत्तो भवन्ति च ।
ततो जीवितभूतस्त्वं जगतः प्राणदोऽसि च ॥

जगतः सफलस्यास्य त्वमेकोऽस्युपकारकृत् ।
कार्योपपादने तत्र त्वत्तोऽन्यः कः प्रगल्भते ॥

अमीषां सुरसंघानां त्वमेकोऽर्थस्य साधने ।
विपत्तिरपि संश्लाघ्योपकारव्रतिनोऽनल ॥

I have referred already to the descriptions of the river-goddess Ganga in Kumarasambhava and Raghuvamsa. In Meghasandesa we find references to God Subrahmanya and other Gods, besides references to Kubera and the Yakshas. In Meghasandesa the poet calls God Subrahmanya as the god of sun-transcending glory placed in the custody of God Agni by God Siva, for the protection of Indra's celestial hosts.

But the sublimest descriptions of Godhead in Kalidasa's works relate to the Trinity. That God is love and His divine actions are only for the welfare and salvation of the universe is clearly stated by him :

विदितं वो यथा स्वार्था न मे काश्चित्प्रवृत्तयः ।
ननु मूर्तिभिरष्टाभिरित्थंभूतोऽस्मि सूचितः ॥

(Kumarasambhava, VI, 26.)

You know that my acts are all disinterested. My eight forms show this truth clearly.

These eight forms of God are described in the famous introductory stanza of Sakuntala as water, fire, sacrificer, sun, moon, ether, earth and air. God is described in Kumarasambhava, VI, 23, as the

creator and preserver and destroyer of the universe. These three aspects of Godhead are Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Brahma is praised in a famous hymn in the second canto of Kumarasambhava. He is shown to be identical with the Supreme Soul (Parabrahma) which existed by itself before creation and which became the gods of the Trinity owing to connection with the three gunas.

नमस्त्रिमूर्तये तुभ्यं प्राक्सृष्टेः केवलात्मने ।
गुणत्रयविभागाय पश्चाद्भेदमुपेयुषे ॥

Vishnu is praised in an equally famous hymn in canto X of Raghuvamsa.

The Lord is thus described there in the following beautiful stanza:

भोगिभोगासनासीनं ददृशुस्तं दिवौकसः ।
तत्फणामण्डलोदर्चिर्मणिद्योतितविग्रहम् ॥

श्रियः पद्मनिषण्णायाः क्षौमान्तरितमेखले ।
अङ्के निक्षिप्तचरणमास्तीर्णकरपल्लवे ॥

प्रबुद्धपुण्डरीकाक्षं बालातपनिभांशुकम् ।
दिवसं शारदमिव प्रारम्भसुखदर्शनम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, X, 7 to 9)

The hymn to the Lord is most heart-uplifting and sublime.

अमेयो मितलोकस्त्वमनर्थी प्रार्थनावहः ।
अजितो जिष्णुरत्यन्तमव्यक्तो व्यक्तकारणम् ॥

हृदयस्थमनासन्नमकामं त्वां तपस्विनम् ।
दयालुमनघस्पृष्टं पुराणमजरं विदुः ॥

सर्वज्ञस्त्वमविज्ञातः सर्वयोनिस्त्वमात्मभूः ।
सर्वप्रभुरनीशस्त्वमेकस्त्वं सर्वरूपभाक् ॥

In Raghuvamsa, III, 49 the Poet says that God Vishnu alone is called Purushottama and that God Siva alone is called Mahesvara. The verses in his works in praise of God Siva are, if possible, even more wonderful than those in praise of Brahma and Vishnu. I have already referred to the introductory stanzas in Vikramorvasiya and Sakuntala. The introductory stanza in Malavikagnimitra is equally famous and describes Godhead as being free from the love of wealth and woman and self. Thus supremacy over avarice and lust and egoism is of the essence of God-attainment. The opening verse in Raghuvamsa is in praise of Parvati and Para-

mesvara. Many verses in praise of them occur in Meghasandesa. Of all the poems in praise of God Siva the most beautiful is that in Kumarasambhava, XII, 9 to 20. I have already referred to the fine verses in praise of Siva in Yoga.

The incarnations of Godhead are vividly described by the poet. Rama's gracious acts are described in Raghuvamsa. The poet refers to Krishna (गोपवेषस्य विष्णोः) in Meghasandesa, I, XV. In Raghuvamsa, X, 31 the poet says in language adapted from the Gita that the Lord has nothing to gain for Himself by incarnations and that it is His Grace that is the cause of His incarnation :

अनवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं न ते किंचन विद्यते ।
लोकानुग्रह एवैको हेतुस्ते जन्मकर्मणोः ॥

Kalidasa had a clear sense of the harmony of religions and a wonderful spirit of toleration. He realised and declared that all the great religions are diverse ways leading to God :

बहुधाप्यागमैर्भिन्नाः पन्थानः सिद्धिहेतवः ।
त्वय्येव निपतन्त्योघा जाह्नवीया इवार्णवे ॥

(Raghuvamsa, X, 26)

(The ways diversified by diverse scriptures are means of spiritual perfection. They all attain thee just as all the waters of the Ganges fall into the ocean).

Perhaps the most sublime portion of Kalidasa's thought is that relating to the sole and universal and supreme Godhead of which the Trinity is a three-fold manifestation. He calls God as Ineffable light (ज्योतिर्मयं—Raghuvamsa, X, 23), omnipotent and self-existent (परिगतशक्तिरात्मभूः— Sakuntala, VII, 34), changeless (अविक्रियः—Raghuvamsa, X, 17) omniscient (सर्वज्ञ— Raghuvamsa, X, 20), the cause of all (सर्वयोनिः— Raghuvamsa, X, 20), the ruler of all (सर्वप्रभुः Raghuvamsa, X, 20) (जगदीशः— Kumarasambhava, II. 9). He says that God is realisable by revelation and reason (आप्तवागनुमानाभ्यां साध्यं—Raghuvamsa, X, 28).

Above all, the poet has done the greatest service to Hinduism by dispelling the illusion that there is any question of rank among the Trimurtis.

नमस्त्रिमूर्तये तुभ्यं प्राक्सृष्टेः केवलात्मने ।
गुणत्रयविभागाय पश्चाद्भेदमुपेयुषे ॥

(Kumarasambhava, II, 4)

किं येन सृजसि व्यक्तमुत येन बिभर्षि तत् ।
अथ विश्वस्य संहर्ता भागः कतम एष ते ॥
(Kumarasambhava, VI, 23)

रसान्तराण्येकरसं यथा दिव्यं पयोऽश्नुते ।
देशे देशे गुणेष्वेवमवस्थास्त्वमविक्रियः ॥
(Raghuvamsa, X, 17)

एकैव मूर्तिर्बिभिदे त्रिधा सा
सामान्यमेषां प्रथमावरत्वम् ।
विष्णोर्हरस्तस्य हरिः कदाचि-
द्वेधास्तयोस्तावपि धातुराद्यौ ॥
(Kumarasambhava, VII, 44)

In conclusion I cannot sum up the poet's spiritual ideas better than by the last stanza in Sakuntala which I have referred to in the preceding chapter as summing up the poet's social ideals. It shows how the two ideals are interlinked and shows also the supremacy of the spiritual life.

प्रवर्ततां प्रकृतिहिताय पार्थिवः
सरस्वती श्रुतिमहतां महीयसाम् ।
ममापि हि क्षपयतु नीललोहितः
पुनर्भवं परिगतशक्तिरात्मभूः ॥



CHAPTER XIII.

Kalidasa's Portraiture of Indian Civilisation.

WE are now in a position to sum up our ideas. I have been leading up my exposition of Kalidasa's ideals towards a description of his portraiture of Indian culture and civilisation as a whole. I have stated how he was the finest product of one of the most glorious periods of Indian History. Such a man could not but be an embodiment and an incarnation of the racial genius. He had a synthetic vision of India. India speaks through his voice and her utterance can be recognised in his speech if we have ears to hear and minds to know and hearts to love.

In the opening stanza in Kumarasambhava he suggests that India, like her guardian mountain-range of the Himalaya, has an ensouling deity (देवतात्मा) and that Indian culture is the standard

and the measure and the pattern and the *beau ideal* of all the cultures and civilisations of the world in all times and climes.

स्थितः पृथिव्या इव मानदण्डः ॥

He has described with loving minuteness the Indian seasons and the holy mountains and rivers and cities and places of pilgrimage in India. In Raghuvamsa, XIII, 18, he describes Sri Rama as requesting Sita to let her gracious glance fall on the entire land, suggesting thereby that India has the blessing of the Goddess of Prosperity.

कुरुष्व तावत्करभोरु पश्चान्मार्गे मृगप्रेक्षिणि दृष्टिपातम् ।

I have stated also how by describing Alaka as illumined by the rays from the crescent moon on the head of God Siva, he has hinted at the purification of our worldly life by the spiritual light. I have shown also how in *Raghuvamsa* he has glorified the life in villages and hermitages in India and the worship of the cow and how while knowing and praising righteous town-life he has warned us against the Indian civilisation setting and disappearing in luxury and dissipation and immorality in urban-life.

Kalidasa knew well the beautiful Indian habits and customs and manners and institutions. In Act VII of Sakuntala he describes Maricha as saying that it was his social duty to inform Kanva about Sakuntala's reunion though because of the power of penance the latter knew the event in his inner conciousness.

तथाऽप्यसौ प्रियमस्माभिः प्रष्टव्यः ।

Courtesy and chivalry, though they never took the courtier-like and exaggerated forms which they assumed elsewhere in the world, were and are innate Indian traits. In Raghuvamsa, I, 54, the poet describes King Dilipa as helping his queen to descend from the car and as then getting down from the car himself.

तामवारोपयत्पत्नीं रथादवततार च ।

In Vikramorvasiya Act I the touch and shake of hands by men by way of affectionate courtesy is referred to (परस्परं हस्तौ स्पृशतः). Though there was no such handshake among men and women, a kind and respectful bearing was shown by men towards women. In Act IV of Sakuntala Kasyapa asks his pupil to show the way to his sister भगिनी

referring by that word to Sakuntala. There was a fine combination of dignity and delicacy in the social relations of the sexes. Further, the poet has in many places emphasised that protection to those seeking refuge is a very noble quality of high-souled men.

प्रणिपातप्रतीकारः संरम्भो हि महात्मनाम् ।

(Raghuvamsa, IV, 64)

Kalidasa was a minute and loving observer of the ways and habits of Indian womanhood. He refers in Vikramorvasiya, III, 6 to the way in which Indian women brush back and braid their hair (अलकसंयमन). He refers to their habit of drying their wetted tresses by fragrant smoke and of decorating their tresses with flowers.

स्नानार्द्रमुक्तेष्वनुधूपवासं विन्यस्तसायंतनमल्लिकेषु ।
कामो वसन्तात्ययमन्दवीर्यः केशेषु लेभे बलमङ्गनानाम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVI, 50)

(Cupid, who had deteriorated in prowess at the end of Spring, replenished his power in the maiden's tresses which were let down untied after bath and decorated with the evening-blossomed jasmine flowers after drying the tresses with fragrant smoke).

The poet refers to the same habit by the words केशसंस्कारधूपैः in Meghasandesa, I, 36. He refers also to the modest way in which Indian women of the upper classes in towns and cities drape their forms and draw the garment over their heads (अवगुण्ठनवती— Sakuntala, V, 13). This was certainly not the system of *purdah* or veil at all and even this was unknown to the people at large. Ancient Indian womanhood alone harmonised freedom and modesty. In Raghuvamsa, III, 3, he refers to the fact that pregnant women often eat mud in secret (मृत्सुरभि).

Kalidasa has given us many charming descriptions of the Indian marriage ceremonial. In Raghuvamsa, VII, 19 to 28 and Kumarasambhava, VII, 73 to 91, we find all the resources of his matchless poetic art lavished upon such a delineation. It is noteworthy that though he has described kings with many wives he regards faithfulness to one wife as the highest glory of the marital status. I have already referred to his description of Rama's loyalty to Sita and to the fine stanza in Raghuvamsa VIII, 67. In Raghuvamsa, VIII, 66 King Aja says after Queen Indumati's death that thenceforth his bold-

ness of spirit had set, his joy was gone, his love of music was dead, the seasons bore no delight, ornaments had no value, and his bed was mere loneliness and emptiness.

धृतिरस्तमिता रतिश्च्युता विरतं गेयमृतुर्निरुत्सवः ।
गतमाभरणप्रयोजनं परिशून्यं शयनीयमद्य मे ॥

The kind and affectionate relationship between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law is described in Raghuvamsa, XIV, 5, 6. In the same poem in XIV, 46, 57 the poet describes how the younger brother Laxmana unquestioningly obeyed Sri Rama's order (आज्ञा गुरूणां ह्यविचारणीया) and how Sita when she was banished never uttered one word of reproach against her noble-hearted lord but bewailed and bemoaned her ill-luck and evil fate.

Kalidasa describes also the Hindu attitude towards death and the Hindu death ceremonials. I have shown how he teaches in Raghuvamsa, VIII, 87, 88 that death is the rule and the universal phenomenon and life is the exception and a rare privilege and blessing, and that death should not be viewed as a mere source of misery but as the open door to further and future auspiciousness. In

Raghuvamsa, VIII, 86 the sage Vasishtha sends word to King Aja that the latter should perform the funeral rites with loving care and attention, and that excessive lamentation and tears cause pain to the disembodied spirit which has left its earthly tabernacle.

अपशोकमनाः कुटुम्बिनीमनुगृह्णीष्व निवापदत्तिभिः ।
स्वजनाश्रु किलातिसन्ततं दहति प्रेतमिति प्रचक्षते ॥

In Kumarasambhava, IV, 35 to 38 we find an equally fine and tender description of exequial ceremonial and the obligations of friends and relations on such an occasion.

We find in Kalidasa unexpected references to some peculiar, and even apparently superstitious, mental habits and ideas of the Hindus. For instance if a man steps in when he is being talked about, it is usually regarded as an auspicious omen. Kalidasa makes Vasishtha say in Raghuvamsa, I, 87 that the king should regard his desire as one of quick and sure fulfilment because the cow Nandini came in when her name was being mentioned.

अदूरवर्तिनीं सिद्धिं राजन्विगणयात्मनः ।
उपस्थितेयं कल्याणी नाम्नि कीर्तित एव यत् ॥

In fact the idealisation of the cow in Raghuvamsa is one of the essential and fundamental ideas of the Hindu race. Another Hindu idea is that if there is the continuous music of pipes and drums on an auspicious occasion that is a sign and guarantee of continuous auspiciousness. The poet refers to this idea when he says that on the occasion of Atithi's coronation it was inferred from the sweet and successive and stately sounds of beaten drums that there would in his reign be an unbroken succession of auspicious events.

नद्भिः स्निग्धगम्भीरं तूर्यैराहतपुष्करैः ।
अन्वमीयत कल्याणं तस्याविच्छिन्नसन्तति ॥

(Raghuvamsa, XVII, 11)

In Sakuntala we find many references to omens. When entering the hermitage of Kanva, Dushyanta refers to the throbbing of his right shoulder. In the fourth Act Anasuya stumbles and scatters her gathered flowers, and this is regarded as a bad omen. In Act V Sakuntala says that her right eye was throbbing and regards it as a bad sign. On the other hand in Act VII the king finds his right shoulder throb and asks how it could happen so

when he had no hope of reunion with his beloved. I have already referred to the fine and characteristic Hindu ideas in Raghuvamsa, VIII, 87 and 88, where the poet says that death is the universal fact and that life is the exception to the rule and a unique gain and blessing, and that death should not be regarded as a source of agony but as a means of release and a door opened towards the attainment of future auspiciousness (कुशलद्वारं). In the same canto in stanzas 91, 92, 93, 94 and 95 the poet shows how true and poignant love, despite the lessons of philosophy, is full of a seeking yearning for the beloved and attains its passionate desire of union with the beloved in heaven.

Kalidasa has referred also to the many triumphs of Indian invention which added to the comforts and graces of life. In Raghuvamsa, XVI, 49 he describes how during the long and intense Indian summer rich men cooled the day-time and escaped the heat by lying on sandal-cooled marble couches while revolving sprinklers of cool water plied all round cooling the surrounding air.

मन्त्रप्रवाहैः शिशिरैः परीतान् रसेन धौतान्मलयोद्भवस्य ।
शिलाविशेषानधिशय्य निन्युर्धारागृहेष्वातपमृद्धिमन्तः ॥

In Malavikagnimitra, II, 12 he refers to revolving sprinklers of cooled water (भ्रान्तिमद्वारिचक्रं). The poet shows how in his days Indian medicine was in a high state of perfection. I have referred to his knowledge of the efficacy of cutting a snake-bitten finger for the sake of saving the life. In Raghuvamsa, III, 12, he refers to the physicians who were experts in treating cases of pregnancy and in the treatment of diseases of children.

कुमारभृत्याकुशलैरनुष्ठिते भिषग्भिराप्तैरथ गर्भभर्मणि ।

Kalidasa knew also other fields of life in which the Hindus attained excellence. He knew well about the Indian excellence in cutting and polishing precious stones. Many of his similes refer to this in a charming way.

दिलीपसूनोर्मणिराकरोद्भवः प्रयुक्तसंस्कार इवाधिकं बभौ ।
(Raghuvamsa, III, 18)

अत्याकरसमुत्पन्ना मणिजातिरसंस्कृता ।
जातरूपेण कल्याणि न हि संयोगमर्हति ॥
(Malavikagnimitra, V, 18)

He refers in Raghuvamsa canto I verse 4 to the

piercing of other precious stones by diamonds (मणौ वज्रसमुत्कीर्णे). In Vikramorvasiya, II, 21, he says that affectionate words divorced from true and passionate love will not enter the hearts of women, just as mere artificial coloration of stones will not deceive the experts in precious stones.

प्रियवचनकृतोऽपि योषितां
दयितजनानुनयो रसादृते ।
प्रविशति हृदयं न तद्विदां
मणिरिव कृत्रिमरागयोजितः ॥

I have already referred to the poet's description of splendid cities and beautiful gardens and luxurious palaces. I have shown also how he makes us realise Indian's greatness in martial expeditions and in feats of valour. In Raghuvamsa, XVI, 55 he describes how before bathing in a river we should have it cleared of alligators with the aid of fishermen and by means of fishing nets (आनाय्यिभिस्तामपकृष्टनक्राम् ।) In Raghuvamsa, XVI, 68 he describes नौविमान *i.e.* boat built like a chariot.

In these and other respects Kalidasa makes us realise what a refined and prosperous and civilised

country our motherland was at that time. He has described her beauty, her dharma, her rise and her fall. In Raghuvamsa he describes the noble rise and the ignoble setting of one of the greatest epochs of Indian civilisation. But he had an immense faith in the potency of Indian civilisation and in the great future of Indian culture. His faith in his motherland was invincible. In the description of the *asvamedha* sacrifice in Raghuvamsa and in Malavikagnimitra, he describes how the sacrificial spirit and military prowess went hand in hand. In the memorable passage in Raghuvamsa, canto I verse 5 (आसमुद्रक्षितीशानामानाकरथवर्त्मनां), he describes the suzerains and emperors of India as mighty potentates who ruled the whole earth from sea to sea and whose aerial cars rode the air. In Vikramorvasiya, III, 19 he describes the imperial power which sat on the throne at whose footstool all other monarachs bowed with bent diadems and over which shone the white umbrella which was the symbol of universal sovereignty. Kalidasa's aspiration for India soared in the direction of the idea of an Indian *Chakravarti* (emperor) who would rule the entire globe. In Act I verse 11 of Sakuntala we have a vision of this goal. The poet has sug-

gested to us how Sakuntala who is the child of a man and a goddess, of tapas (asceticism) and bhoga (enjoyment) is the fit parent of an emperor of India. He has shown how a prince conceived in a hermitage and brought up in heaven was fitted and was destined to unify India and give his name to his motherland and rule the universe. Then comes in Act VII verse 33 the grand and noble stanza which is full of faith in India and assured about her glorious destiny, and which shows how Kalidasa displayed in *Sakuntala* his epic vision of Indian supremacy just as he displayed his epic vision of Indian heroism in *Kumarasambhava* :

रथेनानुद्धातस्तिमितगतिना तीर्णजलधिः
पुरा सप्तद्वीपां जयति वसुधामप्रतिरथः ।
इहायं सत्त्वानां प्रसभदमनात्सर्वदमनः
पुनर्यास्यत्याख्यां भरत इति लोकस्य भरणात् ॥

(Crossing the seas with steady and unstumbling movement he, peerless in power, shall conquer the seven-islanded earth. In this heritage he is known as Sarvadamana as he has subjugated all the animals. He shall be known as Bharata as he shall be a protector of the whole universe).



CHAPTER XIV.

Valmiki, Kalidasa and Tagore.

IN comparing these three great poets I have a great purpose in view. I take them as the points of culmination and self-expression of three great ages in India and shall try to assess their contributions to the glory of India and the welfare of the world. It seems to me that such an effort will be a fitting sequel to the last chapter and a fitting prelude to the coming chapter and will fittingly lead up to the conclusion of this work.

Valmiki, 'the first warbler', 'the morning star of song who made his music heard below' is rightly reckoned as one of the chief glories of India. His sweet breath preluded those melodious bursts that filled the spacious times of Sri Krishna "with sounds that echo still." According to Hindu ideas the *Kavi* is a person who is a क्रान्तदर्शी or a man of vision

before whose gaze nothing in earth or heaven is veiled and who can see far and deep into things and who kindles vision in others. The Gita calls God as कविं पुराणं *i.e.*, the most ancient of poets. The creation is God's poem which is full of eternal and infinitely varied and modulated melody. The most soaring and sublime poetry of the world is found in the Vedas. The Vedic seers saw the intenser spiritual glory which was hid by the intense glory of creation. They prayed thus :

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥

(The face of Truth is hidden by the golden disc of the sun. O Pushan, withdraw these blinding rays awhile so that I may have a vision of the Eternal Truth). They realised the Bliss which is at the heart of all creation. In the *Ramayana* of Valmiki we find the manifestation of the same realisation of Bliss in relation to the earthly life which is full of mingled strands of pain and pleasure. Bliss viewed in relation to our fleeting and pain-shadowed earthly life is love and pity and it was out of pity (Karuna) that poesy was born. Such is the inner

significance of the world-famous story of the origin of the Ramayana.

Valmiki did not describe an imaginary or ideal state of society. He saw and sang Rama Rajya. He learnt about Rama from Narada. The grace of God completed that picture in his mind and heart. He lived at a time when learning was spiritual and sovereignty was selfless and protective. His poem is the epic of the household. Valmiki reached out into the great world through the happy and ethical family. His poem is the glorification of *Nishkama Karma* (selfless action). It is the apotheosis of duty.

This is not the place for entering into a description of the genius of Valmiki. That is a great and sublime task by itself. We can never understand later Indian poetry and history if we do not realise the greatness and the teachings of Valmiki. When we compare the *Mahabharata* with the *Ramayana*, the truth of this observation will become abundantly clear to us. I have said in my work on *Tagore: Poet, Patriot and Philosopher*: "The Mahabharata is to the Ramayana what the ocean is to the Ganga. It is wider, fuller, deeper. In it we enter a more sophisticated world where however

the wrestlings of the soul with the inner promptings of desire and the outer seductive calls of wealth and power and physical enchantment result in a robust manliness of psychic endowment and the victory remains on the whole with the soul in its eternal war with sense. God incarnate as Krishna guided that development and was not merely the warrior and the statesman and the thinker and the philosopher and the saint *par excellence* but was also the ideal child and the fascinating youth and the perfect poet and the heart-enchanting musician." In the Mahabharata we find the varied efflorescence of the ideal of *Nishkama Karma i.e.* Yoga and bhakti and Jnana and a vigorous social and political life as the basis of such higher spiritual life. Tagore says well that the two great epics contain "the eternal history of India" and that "the history of what has been the object of India's devoted endeavour, India's adoration and India's resolve is seated on the throne of eternity in the palace of these two vast epics."

That Kalidasa's debt to Valmiki is ample and was amply acknowledged by him has been shown by me in the earlier volume of this work. He refers

to Valmiki most respectfully in the Raghuvamsa as the *Poorva Suri* (the ancient poet-saint), as *Kavi* (poet), and as *muni* (saint). I have shown how he was indebted to Valmiki for the idea underlying the Meghasandesa, for his *Raghuvamsa*, and for many of his most fascinating ideas and expressions. Indeed if we compare Valmiki's prologue descriptive of the ideal man and king and Kalidasa's prelude to the Raghuvamsa descriptive of the ideal men and kings who belonged to the great solar line of kings, we can well realise the supreme source of Kalidasa's poetic inspiration.

If we compare Valmiki's poem with Kalidasa's works, we find the greatness of each poet becomes all the clearer to our minds. Valmiki's work has a freshness, a directness, a limpid flow like that of the *Tamasa* river which is lovingly described in it as being lovely and clear like the mind of a good man. It has got also a wide and full grasp of the eternal verities of life. The characters described in it have a moral stateliness and an epic sublimity for which there could not be and have not been any parallels in any other literature in the world or even in Indian literature itself. The characters of Rama and Sita have

been so sublimely drawn that they have become a portion of the quintessential inner life of India and have passed through India into the life of the world. Scholars have urged that the Ramayana deals with mere myth and legend and that Sita typifies agriculture and that Rama's fight with Ravana is only a new edition of Indra's fight with Vritra. But we are not concerned here with these fanciful theories. The poetic and spiritual value of the *Ramayana* will not suffer by the mere adumbration of such fantastic guesses and hypotheses and conjectures.

Kalidasa with his fine sense of artistic fitness and his innate reverence for Valmiki never strove or sought to challenge a comparison with him. That was why he made his Ramayana chapters in Raghuvamsa so brief and laconic and skipped over many incidents revelatory of character, amplifying only where the older poet had left room for elaboration and amplification. As Kalidasa belonged to a later and more sophisticated age and had all the resources of India's developed art and culture at his command, he aimed at a great variety of themes and metrical forms and figures of speech and thus sought and achieved distinction in a field where supremacy

was still attainable despite the unparalleled eminence of Valmiki. His language has a more conscious grace, a more elaborate ornamentation, and a larger economy of words, if it has less directness and freshness and flow. He has rendered and interpreted in his work the complexity and variety of his great and cultured epoch and hence he has given to us a wider variety of themes and aspects than the older poet has done, though none of the creations of Kalidasa can come anywhere near the supreme characters delineated in the poem of Valmiki.

I have shown above how Kalidasa's age was a great and inspiring age though it could not stand comparison with the age of Rama Rajya and the epoch of Yudhishthira In some respects Indian civilisation had achieved new elements of glory and grandeur, though in some other respects such as sublimity of ethical life and sweetness of spiritual life there was a decline. The age of Vikramaditya was one of the greatest epochs in all history and was one of the most dazzling epochs of Indian history. Kalidasa felt all the higher influences of his age, and his keen and sensitive and richly endowed mind enabled him to meet the glorious environ-

ment at a thousand points of contact. His learning was as remarkable as his wisdom ; his clarity of vision was as vivid as his sympathy and his gift of vision. Hence it was that, being gifted with a great mind and living in a great epoch and at the court of a king who was the central figure of a great age, he was able to sum up India's past and present and utter wise and prophetic words of warning and of hope and of jubilation in regard to the future destiny of India.

Tagore belongs to that future which was so vividly prophesied by Kalidasa. His indebtedness to Valmiki and Kalidasa is as clear as his reverence and admiration for them. Valmiki and Kalidasa were both poet's poets and they had the supreme gift of enkindling poetic fire in the hearts of the favoured children of the Muses. Tagore says that the *Ramayana* and the Mahabharata seem to be India's own, the poet being hidden in the poem, and that the entire culture of India is expressed in those great poems. He says : "In the *Ramayana*'s simple *anushtup* rhythm the heart of India has been beating for thousands of years. The *Ramayana* is ever showing us a picture of

those ancients who thirsted for the nectar of the *Full*, the *Undivided*. If we can preserve our simple reverence and hearty homage for the brotherliness, love of truth, wifely devotion, servants' loyalty depicted in its pages, then the pure breeze of the Great Outer Ocean will make its way through the windows of our factory-home." Tagore shows also how we are doing an injustice to Kalidasa by regarding him as a poet of mere aesthetic enjoyment. He says that in Kalidasa, as in Vyasa and Valmiki, we find the shrine of renunciation set as the object of adoration in the very palace of sense-delights. Mr. Aurobindo Ghose says: "Kalidasa is the great, the supreme poet of the senses, of æsthetic beauty, of sensuous emotion. The delight of the eye, the delight of the ear, smell, palate, touch, the satisfaction of the imagination and taste are the texture of his poetical creation and into this he has worked the most beautiful flowers of emotion and sensuous ideality." This fine passage errs by over-statement. He himself says that Kalidasa's sensuousness is not "heavy with its own dissoluteness, heavy of curl and heavy of eyelid, cloyed by its own sweets, as the poetry of the senses usually is". In Tagore's words Kalidasa's sensuousness

has the soul of spirituality in it and that in him we see "the development of flower into fruit, of earth into heaven, of matter into spirit."

Tagore has derived his impulse and inspiration from many sources. The great poets and saints of India's past, the mediaeval leaders of the Bhakti movement, the mystics of Islam, and above all the great and potent forces of modernity have combined to give his genius its many sided and composite brilliance, thus adding to his native and innate glory of soul. The debt he owes is large, nay, immense; but it is a debt handsomely acknowledged and wisely assimilated. In it though there are great and valuable and diverse elements, Valmiki and Kalidasa form the most potent factors. Tagore says well about Kalidasa: "This ancient poet of India refuses to acknowledge passion as the supreme glory of love; he proclaims goodness as the final goal of love".

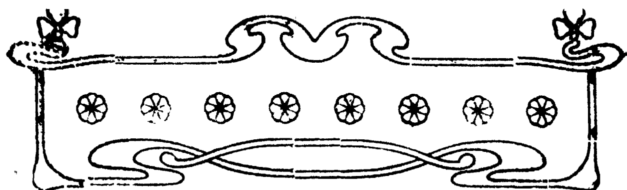
Tagore is thus a child of modernity and a leading figure of the modern Indian Renaissance. These facts have given his genius its special bias and its peculiar efflorescence. There have been interposed between him and Kalidasa the great medieval bhakti movement and the modern age of

science and democracy and nationalism. We must therefore be prepared to find in him a summation and an expression of the new forces surging through the land and we find these forces expressed in his art with remarkable power.

That is why Tagore, while he has all the sensuous sweetness of Kalidasa combined with his clarity and wisdom and spiritual elevation and harmony, has other special excellences of his own due to the forces which have been operative in the culture of India since the time of Kalidasa. He has not the great and inevitable artistic instinct of Kalidasa. He has not got the elder poet's perfect poise and balance and power held in reserve and under control. He has not got Kalidasa's dramatic skill and power of vivid characterisation. Nor has he got Kalidasa's power of epic presentation. It goes without saying that he has not got Valmiki's directness and freshness and limpid flow and power of presentation of ideal and heroic figures. But he has a more varied music. His lyric range is wonderful and his power of capturing fugitive loveliness and universal emotion and presenting it in lovely verse is remarkable. He has shaken himself free from the

cramping fetters of strict æsthetic rules which are not based on artistic necessity while he certainly obeys all natural laws of refined artistic self-expression. More than anything else his mystical poems and his patriotic songs and his plays full of lyric moods and suggestive symbolism have introduced into our literature new forms of artistic expression and have kindled in us new impulses of artistic delight. Thus the authentic voice of India has been heard through the ages in the utterances of Valmiki, Kalidasa and Tagore.





CHAPTER XV.

Kalidasa's Influence on the World's Literature.

KALIDASA thus occupies a unique place in the literature of India and in the literature of the world. The ideal world of national literature is rich in proportion to the real world of national life. We cannot have an outer national life full of low aims and mutual strife and universal exploitation and yet achieve lofty ideals of high aims and endeavours and harmony and perfection in the world of art. It is by art and religion that man definitely raises himself above the sub-human kingdom into the kingdom of supermen and divine beings. Art implies imagination, and religion implies spiritual vision, and imagination and spiritual vision are the two divine faculties implanted in man. The greatest poets

combine both these faculties and are hence revealers of the beautiful and the good and the true as a trinity in unity and as a unity in trinity.

Kalidasa's great influence on the literature of the world and on Indian literature in particular is due to his possession of these two faculties in exquisite combination. I have shown above how his poetry is not merely "simple, sensuous, and passionate." He has finely felt and finely expressed the diviner moods and movements of life. When we compare him with the great poets of the world, such as Homer and Virgil and Dante and Shakespeare and Milton, we find that he is worthy of being in such a noble group. Nay, even in comparison with Valmiki and Vyasa, he does not suffer at all. Though he has not got the special excellences of each of these masters of song, he has got many of their great qualities, and he has got also some special graces and glories of his own which will make him a potent poetic and spiritual force for ever.

Two tests of the permanent value of a poet's work are the extent to which his most memorable utterances have passed into the hearts of the people

and have become a portion of their higher utterance, and the extent to which his works are studied by young and old and form instruments of delight and upliftment to persons in diverse stages of life. Judged by both these tests Kalidasa occupies a very high place. Many of his pithy and wise verses have become a portion of the intellectual and emotional equipment of the people of India. The boys and girls of India literally lisp in his numbers, because the very first Sanskrit work which they study is his *Raghuvamsa*. And as we age in life and gather experience and tolerance and kindliness and composure of spirit and desire to attune ourselves more and more with the higher world of the spirit, the fascination of Kalidasa on our minds and hearts grows more and more. In the Upanishads, in the Ramayana, in the Gita, and in Sakuntala we seem to hear the authentic voice of our own higher self—a voice which "allures to higher worlds and leads the way".

That is the reason why Kalidasa has been such a powerful force in the world's literature. In my chapters on *Kalidasa's predecessors* and *Kalidasa's successors*, I have shown who influenced his genius, and who have been influenced by his genius here as

well as elsewhere. Goethe's testimony to his greatness is the highest of such tributes to his worth, but it is the best among a large multitude of such tributes.

To Indian literature Kalidasa has shown an ideal which must be remembered age after age and generation after generation. The dangers which perpetually threaten and assail the Indian imagination are the liability to extravagance, the tendency to slavish adherence to aesthetic rules, and roundaboutness and verbosity. The Indian intellect can escape this danger only if it guides itself by the light shed by Kalidasa's genius and realises the value of his restrained imagination, naturalness of utterance which is decorated but not over-loaded with ornament, and brevity and terseness of speech. Kalidasa has shown also how Indian literature can best serve the interests of India by holding aloft the banner of renunciation by combining the ideals of *bhoga* and *tyaga* (enjoyment and renunciation) wisely and well, by emphasising the need of a well-watched self-regulatedness of life, by preaching purity of sexual love, by showing the supreme importance of social service and social concord, and by revealing the highest joys of the spiritual life.

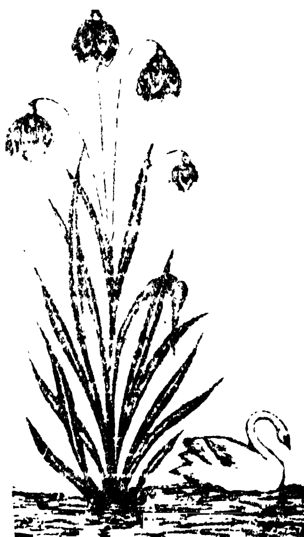
If India's need of Kalidasa is great, the need of Kalidasa by the rest of the wide, wide world is even greater. He has shown to the literature of the world that the highest literary ideal is not the Greek ideal of absorption in the life of the senses and the mind. He has shown how this life on the earth is the vestibule of a nobler and higher spiritual life. At the same time his self-restrained charm and composure of expression will be a corrective to that riot of thought and expression which sometimes pains our spirit in the best masterpieces of the literatures of the world. From him those literatures can learn how to harmonise the life of man and the life of nature and how the higher ideal is not conquest of nature but communion with nature. From him they can learn how to comprehend and teach a higher social order and a higher ideal of national life and international life. They will learn from him to "control rebellious passion" and to realise that the Gods approve the depth, and not the tumult, of the soul". More than anything else they can, by means of an assimilation of his ideas, rise to a higher sense of the spiritual values in life and make life more full of the love of God and of the grace of God. Well

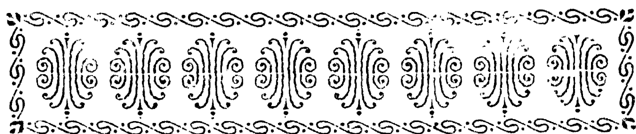
may the whole world, including India, say to him what Himalaya said to the seven sages.

मूढं बुद्धमिवात्मानं हैमीभूतमिवायसम् ।
भूमेर्दिवमिवारूढं मन्ये भवदनुग्रहात् ॥

(Kumarasambhava, VI, 55)

(By your grace I feel like a deluded man restored to wisdom, like iron transformed into gold, and like one lifted from earth to heaven).





CHAPTER XVI

Conclusion.

THIS work has now come to a close. I began it as a brief volume but it has grown of its own accord into a bigger work. The works of Kalidasa have been a daily delight to me and have given me a large measure of comprehension and consolation and composure in life. Perhaps to minds not so consciously attuned to him or to India as a whole, my language may appear to savour of extravagance. But when he is read often with critical yet loving joy, his charm and fascination will grow, and then perhaps my work will have a readier approbation. Indian literature is on its trial to-day. Adverse influences are abroad to discredit Indian literature as well as Indian life and ideals as a whole. No community can maintain its place in the sun which does not give its meed of service to the universal life and which does not win its just

measure of respect from the world at large. No literature in the world can stand the test of time which does not give its honoured contribution to the treasury of universal wisdom and which does not win its just measure of admiration from the world at large. It seems to me that India can best win the regard and admiration of the world by regaining her social harmony and her spirituality of life and by broadcasting once again the life-giving ideas of her immortal sons. I do not know who can bring about this consummation better than Kalidasa. He summed up in himself the best features of the life of India in the memorable ages of her past. He was the culmination of one of the greatest eras of the life of India when India was socially united, politically great, and supreme in learning and in arts. Despite the two thousand years which have fled since his days, he, as in the case of other universal geniuses of the highest order, has a real value for modernity as well. I have shown above how the world's literature has need of him. Our need of him so far as modern Indian *life*, even more than modern Indian *literature*, is concerned, is urgent and imperative. We may well say in the words of Wordsworth's noble sonnett on Milton :

"Kalidasa ! Thou shouldst be living at this hour,
India hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters. Altar, sword and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient Indian dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men,
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power".

I have shown above what is gatherable about Kalidasa the man despite the life-obscuring and myth-making activities of time. I have shown also what forces influenced his genius and in what direction he influenced the later life of the world. I have tried to assess the value of each of his immortal works. I have assayed the task of revealing his many-sided genius—his concepts of Æsthetics, his vision of nature and beauty and love, his ideals of manhood and womanhood, and his social and political and spiritual ideals. I have tried to show the spiritual kinship between him and the earlier and later bards of India. I have sought also to realise and express his place in universal life and literature. As I have observed in my work on Tagore : "In him (Kalidasa) we have the supreme

poet of æsthetic emotion, describing the joys and glories of a more sophisticated but highly refined and variegated world of individual and social life. He was the supreme exponent of the national life in one of its most glorious epochs, and his works are not merely the scripture of the lovers of beauty but form a storehouse and treasury of Indian conceptions of domestic, social, civic, and political perfection. He summed up the past of India to illuminate the present and guide the future. His never-failing sense of duty and his artistic vigilance were in close union with his loyalty to the highest Indian ideals of life and thought. He had drunk deep of life-giving waters of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and is full of reverence for the stalwarts of the more heroic eras of Indian history. His work is a paradise of beauty—not the beauty of dissoluteness crushing the grape of sensuous joy on the eager tongue of desire, but the beauty of purity and self-restraint and renunciation."

Thus it is clear that Kalidasa is a great living force in life and literature today. Mr. Benoy Kumar Sarkar has said well in the passage quoted by me already : "Nobody understands Asia who

does not understand Kalidasa—the spirit of Asia". The contribution of Asia to the intellectual and moral and spiritual life of the universe has been immense and unique. She has been the mother of empires and religions. There is to-day a great resurgence of the higher life in Asia. Europe and Asia and America and the other portions of the world are now linked up in a manner unknown and unfelt in the past. Who can better voice the heart of the New World to itself than Kalidasa. In short, Asia is the heart of the world ; India is the heart of Asia ; and Kalidasa is the heart of India. He alone can bring about the union of the higher thought and the higher speech of universal Man, because he has sung in his immortal poem—we cannot conclude a work on Kalidasa better than with that immortal stanza—that for the attainment of the higher speech and the higher thought we should bow to the divine parents of the universe—Parvati and Paramesvara—who are in loving and intimate and inseparable union and communion like Speech nnd Thought.

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥